Theatrum Redivivum,

OR THE

THEATRE

Vindicated

BY

Sir RICHARD BAKER

IN

ANSWER to Mr. PRYN'S

HISTRIO-MASTIX:

Wherein his groundleſs Aſſertions againſt *Stage-Plays* are diſcovered, his miſs-taken Allegations of the *Fathers* manifeſted, as alſo what he calls his *Reaſons*, to be nothing but his *Paſsions*.

Comici finis eſt humanos mores nôſſe, atque deſcribere,
Hierom. *ad* Furiam.

LONDON,
Printed by *T. R.* for *Francis Egleſfield* at the *Marigold* in St. *Paul's Churchyard*. 1662.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

To the READER.

Courteous Reader,

AT length thou art preſented with a ſmall Piece, which for many years hath been buried with its Renowned Authour. It appeared not till now, knowing very well, that this late World hath been fitter for Bedlam, then for ſober, and Rational Diſcourſes. The Authour wants not evidence for what he ſpeaks, (though ſpeak what he would; if he named a Stage Play, he was ſure to meet with a Momus in every corner)

but ſome things have the ill luck to be condemned, before they are heard. Well (Reader) *ſeeing we are* (*by the providence of Heaven*) *ſo happy, as to be allowed the uſe of our own* Eyes, *and* Reaſon *again; Be as thou oughteſt to be, a* Reader, *before a* Judge. *For to condemn the innocent, is equally to be condemned, with acquitting the guilty. The noble* Authour *of this Book ſeems fairly to deſign nothing more, then Truth, and eſpecially in clearing the Senſe of thoſe two great* Luminaries *of their* Church, *Saint* Cyprian, *and* Tertullian, *his Maſter, in his Book* De Spectaculis, *wherein his principal drift onely is, to cry out againſt, and ſeverely to condemn the mixtures of* Idolatry *with their* publick Shews: *ſome intentions there were of annexing the*

Treatiſe

Treaties of Tertullian, and Saint Cyprian, both to this Diſcourſe; that every man might ſee, what the Authour of this Book ſaw in them: But, for ſome reaſons, that labour is reſpited. It is very well known what Satyrical Invectives are thundred out againſt the Theatre, but their juſt Reaſons are not yet produced; it may be, they are reſerved for the ſecond Volume of Hiſtrio-Maſtix: Indeed if ſome may be ſeen againſt the abuſes of it, from which to reaſon againſt the thing it ſelf, would ingender a conſequence of ſuch large extent, that we muſt eat our words, or be weary of our lives. For if we ſit down by ſuch a Concluſion, that things are unlawfull in their uſe, becauſe unlawfully abuſed, we muſt neither eat, nor drink,

nor

nor sleep, *nor* wear Cloaths, *becau*
in all these, and many more, the bad
ness of mankinde is such, that it prompt
them to unexcusable exorbitancies, *an*
debaucheries. *Good men have found*
ed much of their Rhetorick, *and the*
loudest Declamations *against* Stage
Plays, *upon what others had formerl*
said against them, rather out of a sequa
tious credulity corresponding with wha
others have Magisterially *determined,*
then a due attendency either to the Prin
ciples *of* right Reason, *or* Scripture
Authority, *which ought to cast the*
scales, and put greater obligements up
on the Consciences *of reasonable Crea*
tures, then the Conjectures *or* Opi
nions *of the gravest Mortals. But I*
must not forget my self, and enter up
on Apologies *for this learned* Au
thour

Hours *undertaking* (*who hath ſober-*
ly, and judiciouſly acquitted himſelf) *I*
have taken upon me, onely to ſpeak the
Prologue, *and to tell you upon what*
Scene he lays his Diſcourſe: *he needs*
no Epilogue *to plead excuſe for the*
acting of his Part: *And I make*
no doubt, Reader, *if thou wilt but*
vouchſafe him a patient peruſal, but he
ſhall alſo have thy

Plaudite.

THE

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE THEATRE VINDICATED, OR AN ANSWER To Mr. PRINS HISTRIO-MASTIX.

WHo hath not heard of Sr. *Francis Walsingham*, an Eminent *Councellour* in *Queen* ELIZABETH'S *Time*, famous for his *Wisdom* in matters of *State*; and more for his *Piety* in advancing the *Gospel*? yet this was *the Man*, that procured the *Queen* to enter-

tain *Players* for her *Servants*; and to give them *Wages*, as in a juſt *Vocation*. And would he ever have done this, being ſo *religious* a Man, if he had thought *Plays* to be *prophane*; being ſo great a *States-man*, if *inconvenient* to the *State*? And now, me thinks, I have ſaid enough in *defence* of *Plays*.

But becauſe not onely the *Wiſeſt Men* are ſometimes *miſtaken*, and the Truth may be found amongſt the meaneſt. (*Sæpe etiam eſt Olitor valde opportuna loquutus*) It will be fit to lay aſide all conſideration of the *Perſons*, that ſpeak; and onely to take into conſideration, and weigh the *Reaſons*, that are delivered.

It is true, Mr. *Prin* is *Plaintiff*; and it is a great advantage, that an *Accuſer* hath over a *Defender*: not onely in that, he ſpeaks *firſt*, which gets a *poſſeſſion*, as it were, of the hearer's *Hearts*; but becauſe he hath commonly the pretenſe of ſome *notorious Crime* for his *Foundation*, upon which every man naturally is apt to caſt a Stone: where the *Defender* muſt himſelf alone not onely

pull

pull down the *Building*, and raſe the *Foundation*; but vindicate alſo both the *Natural*, and the *acquired* Inclination, and prejudice of the *Hearers*. And eſpecially, the *Accuſer* hath this advantage, when he meets with a *Common Place* of ſome *Vice* to run upon: for then he goes away amain with it; and bears down all before him, with *O Tempora! O Mores!* But moſt eſpecially, if the pretended *Vice* may ſeem to trench upon *Religion*: for then the *Defender* is ſcarce heard ſpeak for the multitude of voices, that are crying out even in *Heatheniſh* Devotions; *Great is* Diana *of the Epheſians*: that whatſoever can be alledged, in *defence*, out of *Reaſon*, is preſently beaten back without reaſon.

But, leaving theſe *diſadvantages* to take their fortunes, and having a clear conſcience, that I no way *encroach* upon the *Bounds* of *true Religion*, I am the bolder to enter the *Liſts*: yet not ſo much taking upon me to be a *Champion* of the *Cauſe*; as onely undertaking to

be a *Wreſtler* with the *Writer*. And this I willingly profeſs, that I *wreſtle* not with him, as he is in his own *Perſon*, for I know him not; and he may be better, then he ſeems to me: but I *wreſtle* with him, onely as he *appears* in his *Book*; which cannot be *fuller* of *words*, and *emptier* of *reaſon*, then it is. And I think it fit to tell, how far his *Book* hath wrought upon me; that where, before the reading it, I took *Plays* onely *de bene eſſe*, as *being* in uſe; after the reading it, I found *Plays Bene eſſe*, and *fit* to be in uſe. For his *Arguments* being taken all up upon *truſt*; and not ſo much as weighed, when he took them; now that he comes to put them *off* again, are found not onely not to be *weight*, but not to be *Silver*; and ſo, where he intended, by his *Book*, to bring into deteſtation the *ſeeing* of *Plays*: he hath rather brought into eſtimation the *acting* of them. For when a man takes upon him to *prove* a Matter; and then either *cannot*, or *doth* not prove it ſufficiently; it leaves not onely a vehement ſuſpici-

on;

on; but a ſtrong conceit in the *Hearers* minds, that his *Cauſe* is not *good*. And as the onely Itch of *Vain-Glory* made many in *Old Time* go out of the *Church*, and become *Hereticks* in *Divinity*: ſo the like Itch of *Vain-Glory* makes other men go out of *Humane Society*, and become *Hereticks* in *Morality*. Like *Eroſtratus*, who burnt the *Temple* of *Diana* at *Epheſus*, for no other cauſe, but to be *talked-of* in the World.

His very *beginning* is very *ſuſpicious*. For he begins not *à Jove* (as yet *Poets*, whom he taxeth ſo much, uſe to do) but *à Diabolo*. He takes his *Firſt Reaſon* from the *Devil*: (*Fol.* 9.) *He therefore thinks* Plays *unlawfull; becauſe they were invented by the Devil*: wherein he ſhews himſelf to be better acquainted with the *Devil*, then *we* are; for we know nothing of it, whether they were of *his inventing*, or *no*: and we may marvel how he comes to know it, unleſs the *Devil* himſelf have told him ſo; and then it is the more unlikely to be ſo, ſeeing *The* Devil *is a Liar*, *and the Father*

of Lies. He will ſay, perhaps, he had it from *Tertullian*; who tells alſo, that the *Angels* were caſt out of *Heaven* for inventing *Aſtrologie*: as true in the one, as in the other. It ſeems, *Tertullian* had no true *Inventory* of the *Devil*'s *Inventions*: yet this man would make us as very *Fools*, as himſelf, to take all for current, that he hears him ſay. But what, if we ſhould ſay, that many things have been *diſcovered*, and made *known* to Men, even by the *Devil*; which yet are *profitable* to be *known*, and *lawful* to be *uſed*? Doth not *Lodovicus Vives* affirm, that the *Devil* invented *Logick*? Yet will any man, that hath *Reaſon*, affirm *Logick* to be *unlawful*? The *Devil* confeſſed *Chriſt* to be the *Son of God*; when the *Jews* knew it not, or would not know it: and is this man ſo very a *Jew*, to think it therefore unlawful to *confeſs Chriſt*? And why is it any better *Argument* to ſay, *The Devil invented it*; therefore it is *Impious*: then to ſay, *God invented it*; therefore it is *Pious*? And yet who knows not of things *invented* by

by God, which, for their *abuſe*, have been rejected? Which he cannot be ſo forgetful, as to deny, if he do but remember the *Brazen Serpent*. If then a thing *Invented*, and *Inſtituted* by God, might, being *abuſed*, be *rejected*; why may not a thing *Invented*, and *Inſtituted* by the *Devil*, the *Evil* being removed, be retained? For it is not the *Inventour*, that makes a thing to be *good*, or *evil*; but *it is the Conformity, or Oppoſition to the Rule, and Will of God*. Indeed by the *Law* of this *firſt Argument* we may ſee what a kind of *Lyon* we are like to finde in the ſequel of his *Diſcourſe*. For where *Tertullian*, and other *Fathers*, prove the *Plays* of the *Heathen* to be all *naught*, and *execrable*; becauſe *Idolatrous*, and full of *Superſtition:* and thereupon infers, that they were *Inventa Diabolorum, Invention of Devils*, as from whom all *Evil* originally doth flow: this man, like a *Crab*, goes backward with their *Reaſon*, and ſaith, *Plays were invented by the Devil*; therefore are *execrable*, and *unlawful:* ſo making that the *Medius Terminus*

nus, or *Proof* of his *Argument*, which the ſpake onely by way of *Exaggeration* and making that his *Foundation*, whic they laid on as onely a *Superſtructur* And even for the guiltineſs of this, yo ſhall ſee in his *next Argument*, with wha a *trick* he ſeeks to put it off again; an yet is willing to *hold* it ſtill.

For [*Fol.* 16.] *Though* he *cannot per haps punctually ſay, that Plays were imme diately invented by the Devil; yet* he *ma truly ſay, they were invented by Idolatrou Heathen People, as the Devil's Inſtrument* which comes much to *One*. But ſee the Judgment of this man; that ſees no what a *Fall* he hath taken by raiſing thi *Argument*; to fall from the *Devil* to *Hea then People*: but well, *Quod dat accipimus* we take what he lays down. *Plays* were not *invented* by the *Devil*, but by *Hea then* People: ſo his *Firſt Argument* is caſ out of Doors by himſelf; and will hi *ſecond* be ſerved with any better *Sawce* For can nothing be lawfully uſed, tha hath been *invented* by *Heathen People* Let him look in *Polydore Virgil*, and ſee how

how many things of our daily use have been invented by them; even the *Letters* he writes his *Book* withall. Then he were best go quickly, and *blot out* all his *Book*; left being written with *Letters*, *invented* by the *Heathen*, the *Devil* should come, and challenge it to be of his *inventing*. Here he thinks to mend the matter with saying; that [*Fol.* 18.] *good things, invented by the* Heathen, *may lawfully be used, but not bad things, as Plays are*: but must he not first prove *Plays* to be *bad*, before this *Reason* will do him any good? And if he can prove them to be *bad*; they shall then be *unlawful* as *bad*, but not as *invented* by the *Heathen*: and so this *Reason* would do him no *good*, though he could make it *good*.

But though he can fetch no *Argument* against *Plays* from the *Devil's Invention*; yet he hath an *Invention* to fetch an *Argument* from him; and this it is: [*Fol.* 28.] *Plays were at first ordained, and destinated to the immediate Worship, and gratification of Devil-Gods: therefore unlawful*

lawful; but he hath no ſooner made this *Argument*, but he finds fault with it himſelf; for [*Fol.* 37.] *ſo were many of our Churches, which now are converted to* Chriſtian *uſes*. Upon this he *replyes*, and then again *rejoyns*, and plays at *faſt and looſe*, goes *in* and *out* ſo often in it, that it were but to run a *Wilde-Gooſe Chaſe*, to offer to follow him. Yet I cannot let paſs one ſubtile part, he plays at parting; where he ſaith, [*Fol.* 40.] that *He for his part thinks it impoſſible, that ever Plays ſhould be reformed; for who ſhould do it? Good men will not; they rather wiſh their ruine, then their uſeleſs welfare: Bad men will not, becauſe they delight in their pleaſing Corruptions.* And ſo he concludes them to be *deſperate, and paſt all hope of Reformation*. But may we not better apply his *Argument* to himſelf; and ſay, We, for our parts, think it impoſſible, that this man's *Malice* ſhould ever be Reformed; for who ſhould do it? God's *Holy Spirit* will not, ſo long as he is reſolved to *continue* in his *Malice*; the *Devil* will not, who would

would have him be *more malicious* then he is, if possibly it might be effected by him: and so conclude his *Case* to be *desperate*, and that he must be fain to go on in the rage of his *Malice* still, for want of One to *mend* him.

But his *Fourth Reason* comes in most stately: where he makes [*Fol.* 42.] *Plays the Pomps of the Devil, and Vanities of this wicked World; which every* Christian *man hath renounced in his Baptism.* But this *Reason* comes not more *vauntingly* in, then we shall see it go *sneakingly* out; as having no *Credit* for want of being known. For who ever took the *Pomps of the Devil* to be meant of *Plays*, and not rather of *Pride*, *Vainglory*, *Luxury*, *Idolatry* especially, and such like? For, if one Man go to a *Play*, and another, in the mean time, be *luxurious*, *arrogant*, and *proud*; in which of these Two shall the *Devil* be said to be in his *Pomps?* Certainly, not in him, that is at a *Play*; for he may be there, and (the rather perhaps for being there) have *Thoughts*, and *Meditations*

tations full of *Humility*; whileſt in t
other, whereſoever he be found, we a
ſure, there cannot be found an *humb*
or a *ſober Thought*: and where *Humili*
and *Sobriety* are wanting, there is t
Devil properly in his *Pomps*, and *Jollit*
This *Argument* indeed is uſed by *Te*
tullian, and ſome of the *Fathers*; wh
ſpeaking of the *Plays* of the *Heathen*, c
them the *Pomps* of the *Devil*, by reaſo
of their *Idolatries*, and *Superſtition*
which juſtly get the name of *Pomp*
of the Devil from all other *Vices*; as b
which the *Devil* is moſt of all *magnified*
and *exalted*. And, it ſeems, this Ma
coming to ſpy it in their *Books*, takes th
Argument as he finds it; and, withou
ever examining the Matter, claps it o
here, as fitly as the *Painter* in the *Poët*
who put a *Horſe's Neck* to a *Man*
Head;

Humano capiti cervicem Pictor equinam.

For what is this to our *Plays*? Not un
like what *Cicero* ſpake of *Piſo*; (who, ou
of opinion of his *Anceſtour's Virtues*, wa
by the People of *Rome* made *Edile*:)

Piſo

so was made *Edile*: not this *Piso*: *Quid enim simile habet, præter Nomen?* *For what likeness, but in the Name?* So we may say; (though in a contrary way) *Plays* are the *Pomps of the Devil*; not our *Plays*: *Quid enim simile habent, præter Nomen?* And one would think, *Tertullian* had taught him plainly enough, that the *Pomps of the Devil* are therefore onely affirmed of *Plays*, because of their *Idolatries*; where he saith: *Si igitur ex Idololatria universam Spectaculorum paraturam constare constiterit; indubitatè præjudicatum erit, etiam ad Spectacula pertinere Renuntiationis nostræ testimonium in Lavacro quæ Diabolo, & Pompæ, & Angelis ejus sunt mancipata, scilicet per Idololatriam: si quid autem ex his non ad Idolum pertinuerit; id neque ad Idololatriam, neque ad nostram Ejerationem pertinebit.* Thus in *English*. *If therefore it shall be made manifest, that all the Materials, and Furniture of Plays be meerly Idolatrous: it will be an undoubted Prejudice, that the renouncing we make in Baptism belongs, and reacheth unto Plays;*

which

which are dedicated to the Devil, his Pomp
and Angels, by reaſon of their Idolatrie
but, if there be any thing in a Play, tha
belongs not to an Idol; neither ſhall i
belong to Idolatry, nor yet reach to th
Renouncing we make in Baptiſm. Wha
could have been ſpoken more plainly,
to have made him underſtand, if hi
Zeal had not blinded his *Underſtanding*?
or to have made him go *right*, if he
had not been wilfully bent to go *aſtray*?
If he would now at laſt but take this
Diſtinction along with him, in ſurveying
his *Book* once again; and apply it where
there is occaſion: it might do him no
ſmall eaſe in disburthening the Body
of his *Book* of many *peccant*, and *groſs*
Humours, which make it ſwell into
this huge Bulk.

It ſeems he can do no good againſt
Plays with his *Arguments* from the *Devil*;
and therefore now he means to give
the *Devil over*: and it is Time; for we
may marvel, what pleaſure he could
take, to keep him company ſo long.
Yet he cannot leave the *Devil* ſo quite,
but

ut he muſt have a *Trick* from him ſtill, nd be tearing mens *cloaths* from off ir *Backs*; as the *Devil* did, *Luke* viii. 7. For his *diſlike* of *Plays* now (though ith interpoſition of ſome *extravagant oncetts*, which he calls *Reaſons*; and will itter take their places afterward) is ecauſe of their *Cloaths* (*Fol.* 179.) He thinks *it not lawfull for Men to wear Womens cloaths, or for Women to wear Mens*; and, becauſe this is often done in *Plays*, and *Maſques*, he utterly *condemns* hem. Yet this is well; there is ſome *moderation* in this: for this *Reaſon* puts not *Plays* to *death*; but onely *confines* hem. For, notwithſtanding this *Reaſon*, they may be *lawfull* enough amongſt the *Indians*, who go *naked*; nd, not to go ſo far, they may be *lawfull* enough too amongſt the *Iriſh*, where *ne* kinde of *Garment* ſerves *Men*, and *Women*. But, though we can be conent to *croſs* the *Water* to the *Bank's-Side*; yet we ſhould be loth to *croſs* the *Iriſh-Seas* to ſee a *Play*: and can we not ſee one here, becauſe of their *Cloaths*?

Indeed

Indeed, he cites a *Text* of *Scripture* for i
Deut. xxii. 5. *The Woman ſhall not we*
that, which pertaineth to the Man; neith
ſhall a Man put on Womens rayment.
pregnant place indeed: but where finde
he this *Precept?* even in the ſame place
where he findes alſo, that we muſt no
wear *cloaths* of *Linſey-Woolſey:* and ſee
ing we *lawfully* now wear *Cloaths* of *Lin*
ſey-Woolſey; why may it not be as *lawfu*
for *Men* to put on *Womens* Garments?
But, if he will have this *Precept* to ſtand
in force, though it be no part of the
Moral Law, yet becauſe it may have a
Moral conſtruction; how will he then de
fend his own eating of *Black-Pudding*
againſt the *Precept* for *eating of Blood*?
For this *Precept* againſt *eating of bloo*
hath a ſtronger Tie, then that for *wearin*
of Garments. For *that*, as given onely
by *Moſes*, may, with juſt probability, be
thought to *end* with *Moſes*: but *this* a
gainſt *eating of blood* is continued after
Moſes Time by the *Apoſtles* themſelves.
And why then ſhould it *trouble* Mr. *Prin*
conſcience to ſee a *Boy* wear *Womens Gar*
ments

ents, againſt the *Precept* of *Moſes*; hen it troubles not his *conſcience* to t *Black-puddings* againſt the *Precept* the *Apoſtles*? But, howſoever it *uble his conſcience*, it need not trou- e *any bodies elſe*; ſeeing his *Reaſon* oves it no more *unlawfull* to *ſee a Play*, en to *eat a Pudding*, and ſo, upon the atter, is not *worth a Pudding*. But, if be ſo great a *ſin* for *Men* to put on *Wo- ens Garments*; what is it for *Men* to put n *Womens Conditions*? which is perhaps deed the very *Moral* of this *Precept*: *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and St. *Cyril*, f old, and of late, amongſt others, *Matchabæus Alpinas* (a *VVriter*, whom *Melanchon* exceedingly commends) ex- ound it. And if it be ſo, then is this an the *true breaker* of the *Precept*; and ot *Players*: at leaſt, if we may call it *Vomens conditions*, to do nothing elſe, ut *ſcould*, and *rail*: for what is all his ook, but a bundle of *ſcoulding Inve- ives*, and *railing*, inſtead of *reaſoning*? ut, to give a full *Anſwer* to this *Argu- ient*; do but hear what *eminent Di-*

vines conceive of this *Precept*. And, th
I may not do, as this *man* uſeth to do
ſhew a *Bee*, bring in the whole *Swarm*
will name you *one* of *many*, yet n
unum è multis, *Martin Luther*: who
words upon this place are theſe; *H*
non prohibetur, quin ad vitandum peric
lum, aut ludendum joco, vel ad fallend
hoſtes, Mulier poſſit gerere arma Viri,
Vir uti veſte muliebri: ſed ut ſeriò, & uſita
habitu talia non fiant; ut decora utriq
ſexui ſervetur dignitas. It is not (ſaith he
forbidden by this Precept; but that
avoid danger, or to play, and ſport,
to deceive an Enemy, a Woman may we
a Man's apparel, and a Man a Woman's
but that it be not done in earneſt, and as the
uſual Habit; that ſo a decent comeline
in both Sexes may be obſerved. And wh
knows not, that *Luther*, when time was
did greater matters in the World, the
making good the *Expoſition* of a *ſingl*
Text. But, leſt you ſhould think it
Lutheran Opinion, or that *Luther* herei
were *ſingular* by himſelf, I will joy
one with him, that had as lieve die, as be

joyned

joyned with him, if he could otherwiſe chooſe, the learned *Jeſuite*, *Lorinus*; who, reciting great variety of *Interpretations* upon this *Text*, makes choice of this, as he *ſoundeſt*; that *Diſſimulatio veſtis poteſt interdum ſine peccato fieri, vel ad repreſentandam Comicè Tragicéve perſonam; vel ad effugiendum periculum; vel in caſu ſimili*: *for repreſenting a Perſon in Comedie, or Tragedie; or for avoiding of danger, or in ſuch like Caſes, a woman may lawfully put on a man's apparel; and a man a woman's.* Thus theſe men allow *that* in *Plays*, for which this man allows not *Plays*. And is it not ſtrange, that Mr. *Prin*, with all his *great Reading*, ſhould never meet with any of theſe? For [*folio* 199.] he *profeſſeth*, he *never met with any, that was of this Opinion*: that either his knowledge muſt be very little, if not knowing it; or his *Profeſſion* very naught, if, knowing it, he diſſemble it.

But, that this *Precept* is not intended *literally*, as any part of the *Moral Law*, is not onely the *Opinion* of moſt *Writers*; but appeareth alſo by the thir-

teenth *Canon* of the *Councel* at *Gangr*
(which this man cites to the contrary:
for, upon that *Canon*, the old *Interpret*
Balſamon delivers it, not onely as *tolera*
ble, but, in *ſome Caſes*, as very *com*
mendable, for *Women* to go in *Mens* ap
parel; as St. *Melane*, and St. *Eugenia*
and other *Holy Women*, are there ſaid to
have done. There is here offered us an
anſwer; that, *though it may be tolerated*
being done to honeſt intents: yet it cannot
be tolerated, being done to lewd purpoſes
as Players *do it*. But this *Anſwer*, like
Mephiboſheth, is *lame of both the Feet*:
for neither do *Players* uſe it to *lewd*
purpoſes; neither, if it were a *branch* of
the *Moral Law*, ought it to be done for
any purpoſe.

But (*Fol.* 156) *Hypocriſie is a notorious*
ſin; *and* Players *are in this notorious*
Hypocrites; *and therefore the* Greeks
have but one word for an Hypocrite, *and a*
Player; *as if they took them both for one*.
A very *goodly Argument!* as though, be-
cauſe the *Latines* have but one word
for an *Hoſt*, and a *Gueſt*: (*Non Hoſpes ab*
Hoſpite

Hoſpite tutus) therefore an *Hoſt*, and a *Gueſt* ſhould be all *one*: which if he would go about to prove, I doubt he would be found *to reckon without his Hoſt*. Howſoever, by this reaſon, we may claim as much difference between an *Hypocrite*, and a *Player*; as is between an *Hoſt*, and a *Gueſt*: and that's difference enough. But what is it, wherein *Players* are ſuch *Hypocrites*? Forſooth! *becauſe men wear womens Apparel, and counterfeit the geſtures, and behaviours of women; and ſo appear to be women, when they are men: and to appear other then they are, is plain Hypocriſie.* It is *plain Hypocriſie*, no doubt; but it is not plain, that it is *unlawfull Hypocriſie*. Is it not ſaid, that ſome *Zeal* is not *good*, if it be without *Knowledg*? and may we not as truly ſay; that ſome *Hypocriſie* is no *evil*, if it be without *Deceit*? For the *evil* of *Hypocriſie* is not in the *Act*, but in the *End*: and though *Players* may be guilty of the *Act*; yet certainly of the *End* they are not. For, ſeeing that, which they do, is not done to *Circumvent*, but

to *Repreſent*; not to *Deceive* others, but to make others *Conceive*: though it may *without queſtion* be called *Hypocriſie*, yet it is not *Hypocriſie*, that can be called *in queſtion*. It is not Hypocriſie *in malam partem*. Was it *Hypocriſie* in the *Three Angels*, that appeared to *Abraham*? yet they appeared other, then they were: they ſeemed *Men*; they were *Angels*: they put on *Bodies*; they were but *Spirits*. And is there not as much *Hypocriſie* in putting on other's *Bodies*, as in putting on others *Garments*? Did not the *Angel Raphael*, when he *conducted* young *Tobias* in his *Journey*, both take upon him the *Name*, and *Perſon*, and counterfeit the *ſpeech*, and *behaviour* of *Azarias*? And will he ſay, that this alſo was no *Hypocriſie*? If then *Angels* might be ſuch *Hypocrites*, and yet not ſin; why may not *Players* be ſuch *Hypocrites*, yet come to be as *Angels*?

I had thought I ſhould have gotten them leave to *Play*, if they would but go *handſomely*, and wear *good cloaths*: but this makes worſe for them then before.

For

For (*Fol.* 216.) *he diſlikes* Plays *now, becauſe* Players *wear ſuch coſtly cloaths: and repreſent* Kings, *and* Queens *in ſuch ſumptuous Robes.* He thinks, perhaps, that *Kings*, and *Queens* ſhould wear no *cloaths*, but made of *Leather*; becauſe it was of that ſtuff, that God made *cloaths* for *Adam*, and *Eve*; who being the *greateſt Princes*, that ever were in the world, it were *Preſumption* for any to wear better *cloaths*, then they did. But I think it beſt to let alone the *Anſwering* of this *Argument* untill we meet at *Amſterdam*: onely I may have leave to ſay this; that he ſhould do *Players* as great *wrong*, to hinder them from *wearing* of *rich cloaths*, as he ſhould do a *Goldſmith*, to reſtrain him from *ſelling* of *rich Plate*: for what do *Players*, but ſell their *Cloaths*, as often as they ſhew them?

All, that hitherto hath been ſaid, hath been but *accidental*, and I may ſay his *outſide Arguments*: he never came to the *ſubſtance* till now; but now he comes, and therefore now we may look

for very *ſubſtantial* matter; and thu
he begins. (*Fol.* 63.) *The ſubject, ma*
ter, and ſtyle of Plays is laſcivious, ſcu
rilous, and filthy: *Therefore Plays are un*
lawfull. But not ſo *unlawfull* as this *Ar*
gument: for mark the *faults* of it. If he
mean it thus; The *ſubject, matter, and*
ſtile of ſome *Plays* is *ſcurrilous*, and *filthy*; Therefore all *Plays* are *unlawfull*:
who ſees not the *unlawfulneſs* of this
kinde of *reaſoning*, from a *particular* to
conclude a *general*? But, if he mean it
thus; The *ſubject, matter*, and *ſtyle* of all
Plays is *ſcurrilous*, and *filthy*: this is more
unlawfull, then the other; ſeeing it is
directly *falſe*: for who knows not, that
Tragedies are not capable of *ſcurrility*?
Although therefore *Tragedies* cannot
get his *leave*; yet, it ſeems, they have his
Argument's *leave*, to hold up their *heads*,
and *live*. But how then will the *Title* of
his *Book* hold up his *Head*, to be called
Hiſtrio-Maſtix? have a *general Name*, if
it be not *generall*? Will he ſay, that *Tragedi* be not *Hiſtriones*; *Actours* of *Tragedies* no *Players*? He ſhould, if he were

well

vell ſerved, be made either to *abridge* his *Title*, or to *enlarge* his *Argument*. But perhaps, becauſe *Tragedies* are the *Gentry*, I may ſay, of *Plays*, he is ſo generous as to ſpare them for their *Gentry's* ſake; but then *Comedies*, which are but the *Commonalty* of *Plays*, are like to pay for it. But I doubt, he hath not ſo much *Generoſity* in him, but rather, that for *Tragedies* he hath other *Tragical Arguments* in ſtore, other *Rods in Piß* for them; and that this *Argument* is wholly imployed upon the *defeat* of *Comedies*: and therefore onely upon them it beats. But is there no means to ſave them from *beating*? Are there not *wards* to *keep of* his Blow even from theſe alſo? May we not, *firſt*, flatly *deny* it, and ſay, that in *Plays* no ſuch *ſcurrility* can be found? Or, may we not, *next*, *divert* it, and ſay; that, if any ſuch *ſcurrility* be, it is the *Poet's* fault, and not the *Players*? Or, may we not, *thirdly*, *excuſe* it, and ſay; If any ſuch be, it is an *abuſe*, at leaſt done in ſuch *mannerly* manner, that it is not *offenſive* to

modeſt

modeſt Ears? Or, may we not, *laſtly, juſtifie* it, and ſay; that ſome *ſcurrility may be*, and ſometimes *muſt be* in *Plays*, yet ſerving always to *pious Uſes?* In any of theſe *Sayings* he hath his *Anſwer*: and may take home his *Argument* with him again, to teach it *better manners*, then to *ſlander Plays*. But let us examine theſe *words*, to ſee if we can make them *good*, that we take not more upon us, then we are able to *perform*. For this *Argument*, though he make it but *one*, yet is, in truth, his *Floodgate*, which lets in the *moſt*, or the *moſt ſubſtantial* of all his *Arguments*: that, if this be once well ſtop'd, he will not have a *drop* of *Water*, either of the *Spring-Water* of *Reaſons*, or of the *Pond-Water* of *Authorities*, to turn his *Mill*. But in doing this there is no neceſſity of uſing *Method*: for why ſhould I be tied to keep order in *anſwering*, when he takes a Liberty to keep none in *objecting*? He is none of the *Methodicals* himſelf, and therefore cannot look, that others ſhould be. To ſpeak then, *prout*

in

in buccam venerit, as matters come to hand: is there in *Plays* ſuch *Scurrility*, and *Obſcenity*, as he pretends? Let him then blame the *Poets*, whoſe fault it is; for *Players* do but *act* that, which *Poets invent*? And what is he the nearer now for *condemning* of *Plays*? Is it not a proper *Argument* to ſay; *Chœrilus* makes naughty *Verſes*: Therefore there muſt no more *Verſes* be made? *Poets* make ſcurrilous *plays*; Therefore *Tolli tota Theatra jube, Throw down all Theatres.* If all things muſt be *caſt away*, that may be, and oftentimes are *abuſed*; why doth not this man pull out his *Eyes* with *Democritus*? or *geld* himſelf with *Origen*? or wiſh with *Nero, Utinam neſcirem Literas! Would I had been an Ignoramus!* But this *Sophiſtry*, *ab Abuſu ad uſum*, is ſo well known now, even *Lippis, & Tonſoribus, to the meaneſt ſort*; that one would wonder, how he could *ſtumble upon* it, but much more, how he could *ſtumble at* it. But we are, perhaps, more *provident*, then we need: we blame *Poets*, when, perhaps, there is no cauſe.

For

For can he charge *Plays* directly with any ſuch *obſcenity*? He *urgeth* indeed certain *general Invectives*, and *Dolus verſatur in generalibus*, *Deceit lies in generals*, but he *inſtanceth* in none: and we doubt not but, if he could, he would; but, ſince he does not, we believe he cannot. The *Stoicks*, a *Sect* of *Philoſophers*, the neareſt of any to *Chriſtianity*, were yet of this *Opinion*; that nothing is *unhoneſt*, or *obſcene* to be ſpoken, which is *honeſt*, or *lawfull* to be done; and therefore they called all parts of the *Body*, and all *actions* of Life (which Modeſty in us ſuppreſſeth) in their common talk, by the *proper* Names, in the *broadeſt* Terms; that we may truly ſay of *Stoicks*, *None were more* ſevere *in the Rules of* Virtuous *Life*, *yet none more* obſcene *in the uſage of* filthy *Talk*. If then *Obſcenity* of ſpeech was no *Diſparagement* in a *Stoick* to the *reputation* of his *Virtue*; why ſhould it be accompted ſo great a *Diſparagement* to the *reputation* of a *Player*? And yet I will allow him this: if any ſuch *Stoical Obſcenity* can be found in *Plays*;

let

t him ſpeak as *bitterly* againſt them, as
e can, I will never call it *Rayling*; but
ill take his part my ſelf: and ſuch, it
ems, was the *Obſcenity* of *Plays* in old
me, as appears by *Salvianus*, *Tanta*
ocum, ac verborum obſcœnitates, ut vel re-
tionem ſui interdicant; that is, *So obſcene*
ere their Words, and Speeches, as not to
e named. And this is the *Obſcenity*,
hich the *Antient Fathers* ſo much cry
ut againſt in *Plays*, as *pudicis auribus*
on ferenda, not to be heard by modeſt ears,
hich I would have this man to note,
hat he may be brought *to lay the Saddle*
n the right Horſe: for in the *Plays* of our
imes he ſhall never be able to ſhew any
uch *Obſcenity*. There are ſometimes
perhaps, when *Neceſſity* compells it, for
repreſenting of ſome *ſcurrilous* perſon,
ſome *ſecret* ſtrains, in *ambiguous* terms,
like the voices of *Oracles*, as it were an
Obſcenity under *Covert*: (the *Obſcenity*,
to make appear the *condition* of the *per-*
ſon; the *Covert*, to expreſs the *modeſty* of
the *Player*) and this is ſo far from of-
fending the *Ears*, that it is not ſenſible,
till

till it have paſſed the *ſence*, as notunde
ſtood, till examined by the Underſtan
ing: and being once there, it com
to be but Obſcenity *in Abſtracto*, whi
was in the world before ever *Plays* wer
and would be ſtill, though *Plays* ſhou
be no more. And in this they do b
imitate *Nature* her ſelf, *quæ partes e*
quæ aſpectum eſſent deformem habituræ, co
texit, & abdidit: who covers the part
which would have no pleaſing aſpect; no
took them clean away, (as this ma
would have it) but placed them ſo, th
as they offend not, being ſeen, t
Eyes; no more do theſe *ſpeeches*, bei
heard, the *Ears*: and would he ha
more modeſty in *Players*, then there
in *Nature*? To expect therefore, tha
Plays ſhould be altogether witho
obſcene Paſſages, were it not to expe
that *Nature* ſhould make *Bodies* altoge
ther without *Privy parts*? And the *hear*
ing of thoſe ought no more to offend
the *Ears* of any, then the *ſeeing* of thes
offended the *Eys* of *Adam*, and *Eve*: o
which, though naked, they were no

whit aſhamed. *Obſcene ſights* did never trouble them, till they had made themſelves *Obſcene Hearts*. For as long as all is clean, that ſhould be clean, the foulneſs of that, which ſhould be foul, will never offend. Have not the neateſt Cities their Sinks, and Chanels? yet who takes offence to look upon them? They are neceſſary for our uſe, but not neceſſary for us to uſe. *They are therefore made foul, that we may walk clean.* Indeed, it is not ſo much the Player, that makes the Obſcenity, as the Spectatour himſelf: as it is not ſo much the Juyce of the Herb, that makes the *Honey*, or *Poyſon*, as the *Bee*, or *Spider*, that ſucks the Juyce. Let this man therefore bring a modeſt heart to a Play, and he ſhall never take hurt by immodeſt Speeches: but, if he come as a *Spider* to it, what marvel, if he ſuck Poyſon, though the Herbs be never ſo ſovereign. How many Queſtions of *Ariſtotle's Problemes*? how many Chapters in Books of *Phyſick* may be found more guilty of ſuch Obſcenity, then

any

any Plays? And if ſuch paſſages in the
Books be ſtill ſuffered, and not to
out; why may not the like paſſages b
ſuffered in Plays, and yet be born out
For as there is good uſe of ſuch Treat
ſes in the Schole of *Nature*, ſo there
good uſe of ſuch ſpeeches in the Schol
of *Manners*: and as in thoſe it is th
Reader's fault, and not the Writer's; ſ
in theſe it is the Spectatour's fault, an
not the Player's, if any evil, or corrupt
on be contracted by them. And h
that ſhould forbear to go ſee a Play; be
cauſe, perchance, he might hear ſom
ſcurrilous ſpeeches, may he not perhap
tarry away, and hear worſe at home
For indeed this whole world is a
a common Stage, where men an
beaſts do play their parts, and wher
men many times play the parts of beaſts
And I would know of this man, what
day he ever lived, that he did not both
hear, and ſee as great Enormities really
committed upon this great Stage, as
are heard, or ſeen, but feignedly re-
preſented, on theſe leſſer Stages? And

is

there not as great danger in ſeeing ces *really acted*, as in ſeeing them onely *ignedly repreſented?* in ſeeing them done *earneſt*, as in ſeeing them but done in *ſt?* When vices are *really acted*, they and as *Copies*, and *Examples*, which men re apt to follow; but when they are on- *feigned* on a *Stage*, they ſtand as *Rocks*, hewed onely to be ſhunned. When ſins re actually committed, they are as *Pitch* hich toucheth us, and muſt needs de- le us; but when they are onely repre- ented, they are but as *Pitch* ſeen in a *laſs*, which cannot defile us, becauſe ot touch us. Where vices are *really cted*, there men may be ſaid to *ſtand in he way of Sinners*; but where they are onely *feignedly ſhewed*, there, men may e rather ſaid, to ſit, and hear their *Ar- raignment*, and *Condemnation*.

But (*Fol.* 48. and 948.) he would make us believe; *That all the attractive power in Plays, to draw Beholders, is meerly from ſcurrility:* as if it were no Play; at leaſt no pleaſing Play, without it. Where- in, beſides his prejudice, he may be

made to confeſs his ignorance: for le
him try it when he will, and come hi
ſelf upon the *Stage*, with all the ſcurrili
of the Wife of *Bath*, with all the ribaldr
of *Poggius*, or *Boccace*, yet I dare affirm
he ſhall never give that contentment t
Beholders, as honeſt *Tarlton* did, thoug
he ſaid never a word. And what ſcur-
rility was ever heard to come from th
mouths of the beſt *Actours* of our Time
Allen, and *Bourbidge*? yet, what Play
were ever ſo pleaſing, as where thei
Parts had the greateſt part? For, it i
not the ſcurrility, and ribaldry, that give
the contentmunt, as he fooliſhly ima-
gines, and falſly ſuggeſts; but it is the
Ingenioufneſs of the Speech, when it is fit-
ted to the Perſon; and the *Gracefulneſs*
of the *Action*, when it is fitted to the
Speech; and therefore, a Play *read*, hath
not half the pleaſure of a Play *Acted*:
for though it have the pleaſure of *ingeni-
ous Speeches*; yet it wants the pleaſure of
Gracefull action; and we may well ac-
knowledg, that *Gracefulneſs* of *action*, is
the greateſt pleaſure of a *Play*, ſeeing it

is

s the greateſt pleaſure of (the Art of leaſure) *Rhetorick*: in which we may e bold to ſay; there never had been ſo good Oratours, if there had not firſt been Players: ſeeing the beſt Oratours that ever were, account it no ſhame, to have learned the gracefulneſs of their Action, even from Players: *Demoſthenes* from *Satyrus*; and *Cicero* from *Roſcius*. Let him therefore keep his ſcurrility to himſelf, and ſend his Proſelytes to ſit with his Hoſteſs at *Oxford*; whoſe *Apophthegm* was, *No mirth without Bawdrie*: as for us, we are contented, to ſee Plays in their beſt *Garments*, and not in their *foul cloaths*, in their *graces*, and not in their *faults*.

But who are they in Plays, that uſe ſuch ſcurrilous, and obſcene ſpeeches? Hath not a Poet ſaid well;

Triſtia mœſtum
Vultum verba decent, Iratũ plena minarum,
Ludentem, laſciva; ſeverum, ſeria dictu.

Indeed, if they were put into the mouths of Princes, or Perſons of gra-

vity, there were juſt cauſe of diſlike: but to be put into the mouths of ſcurrilous, and baſe perſons, What hurt can they do? None to the Actours; for the *decorum* takes away their fault, and makes that faultleſs, which is *decent*, and leſs to the Spectatours: for how can it *infect them*, to imitate the ſcurrility, when they ſee it, comely for none, but ſcurrilous perſons? It rather teacheth them to avoid and loath ſuch ſpeeches, ſeeing they cannot but loath to be ſuch perſons. For doth this man think, that goers to Plays are ſuch ſimple Ideots; that when they ſee a beaſtly, or prophane part acted before them, they take it to be done for imitation? Then were the *Lacedæmonians* very fools; who to make their children abhor *Drunkenneſs*, would make their *Slaves* drunk of purpoſe; and act the vice before them; that ſeeing in others a deformity ſo hatefull, they might learn, in themſelves to hate the deformity.

Sic teneros animos aliena opprobria ſæpe
Abſterrent vitiis:

The

The man had an Itch to be writing a Book; and becauſe he had not matter to make it *good*, he was deſirous at leaſt to make it *great*; he would have a great *Club*, though never ſo hollow. Greatneſs, he knew makes a ſhew, and ſhews carry all in the *Eye* of the world; Subſtance is but ſeldom underſtood, and therefore not often much ſtood upon. And it may be ſome pleaſure, to obſerve, with what winds he blows up the bladder of his Book; and what pretty tricks he uſeth, to furniſh his Table of Vain-glory with variety of Diſhes. He hath one trick, which he uſeth in his Text; and ſeems to have learned it from *Egge-Saturday* in *Oxford*, to make diverſity of meats, with diverſity of dreſſing: As for example; Take the word *Effeminate*, this one word ſhall furniſh him with four, or five ſeverall Diſhes of *Arguments* againſt Plays: as firſt, (*Fol.* 546.) *Plays effeminate mens minds and bodies, therefore Plays are unlawfull.* This is one of his Diſhes. (*Fol.* 167.) *The very action of plays is effeminate; therefore plays are unlawfull.*

This you muſt take for another Diſh; (*Fol.* 220.) *Plays are ever attended with effeminate, and amorous Dancing; therefore Plays are unlawfull.* This is another; and I ſhould cloy your ſtomacks too much, if I ſhould ſerve in all his *Diſhes* of this kinde. He hath another *Trick*, which he uſeth in his citing of *Authours*; and ſeems to have learned it from *Gnatho* in *Terrence*, where he counſelleth,

Vbi nominabit Phædriam, *tu continuo* Pamphilam; for where his *Argument* calls for *Ludos in Theatro*; he thereupon brings in, *Ludos in circo*; *Ludos in foro*, *Ludos in ſeptis*, where the matter requires Teſtimonies, againſt *Tragedies*, and *Comedies*, he preſently brings in places of *Fathers*, and others, againſt ſpectacles of *Fencing*, againſt *Bear-baiting*, againſt *Horſe-Races*, and ſuch other *Games*; as like to Plays, as Chalk is to Cheeſe; and by theſe, and ſuch like means, he hath made a great bellied Book, as if there were ſome goodly childe within it; when being ript up, and look'd into, there is nothing to be found,

found, but a very *Timpany* of wind, and water. For, after all his buſtling, and ſtir; after all the *Crambees* of his (*Fol.* 165.) *four* and *fourty* Tautological *Arguments*, it comes all but to this; that in *Plays* are often uſed Speeches, and other Circumſtances, *effeminate*, *idle*, *ſcurrilous*, *obſcene*, *prophane*, and *Heatheniſh*; and therefore (*Fol.* 447.) *corrupt mens manners*, *infect their affections*, *debauch their diſpoſitions*; and (*Fol.* 321.) *generally indiſpoſe them to all goodneſs*; which is all nothing, but either his miſs-taking through *ignorance*, or his enforcing through *malice*; for though ſuch Speeches are ſometimes, perhaps uſed; yet the *decorum* in the Speaker, the *intent* of the Speech, the *nature* of the Example, make them all warrantable; and are ſo far from working the *effects* he ſpeaks of, that they rather *rectifie* the *Judgment*, *qualifie* the *Affections*, *moderate* the *Paſſions*, and generally diſpoſe them to all *Virtue*: that where we meant but onely to defend *Plays*, he hath brought us now, that we are forced to praiſe them;

them; and where we thought but one
ly to keep them from taking wrongfu
diſgrace; we cannot keep our ſelv
now, from giving them deſerved com
mendations. For, what can be mor
worthy our embracing, then that, whic
both intends our good, and worketh i
us, the good it intends? and what d
Players intend, by bringing in a *Tyran*
with words of death, and hands imbrue
in blood, but to ſhew the deformity o
Tyranny, to make us deteſt it? And d
they intend this good to us; and d
they not as well work it in us? Certain
ly, even this as forcibly, as that, ap
parently; for ſeeing there are two prin
cipall Motives to Virtue, *Praiſe*, and *Re
ward*; and two things likewiſe that de
terr from Vice, *Shame*, and *Puniſhment*
what can be more forcible, either to
draw us to *Goodneſs*, or to withdraw us
from *Vitiouſneſs*, then where the ex
amples of all theſe are moſt lively ſhew
ed, and repreſented to us? Certainly, un
leſs men be ſtark fools; rather wilfully
to run into *Pudles*, and *Quagmires*, then

to

take a fair way when it is ſhewed em; they cannot chooſe by ſuch examples, but be drawn to walk in the aths of *Virtue.* And let him not ſay, as ome have ſaid; that ſcurrilous, and profhane ſpeeches are very dangerous for nfecting the hearers; becauſe *Aſſueſcendo audire, diſcunt facere, By enuring themſelves, they learn to practiſe*; for this were ikely to be true, if they onely heard uch ſpeeches, and ended there, which s the faſhion indeed of the common ctions in our life; but here, where we no ſooner hear the words ſpoken, but preſently withall, we ſee the ſhame, and puniſhment that attends them; certainly, it would be very ſtrange, that by often hearing ſuch ſpeeches, we ſhould get a cuſtom of following them; and not rather, by often ſeeing their diſgraces, get a cuſtom of avoiding them. And to this purpoſe, there is in *Seneca*, a pretty tale of the Poet *Euripides*, who, in one of his *Plays*, having made a Speech of a high ſtrain, in magnifying of *Riches*, the people grew ſo tumultuouſly

ouſly angrie at it, (fearing leaſt ſuch ſpeeches, ſhould make men in love with riches, and prone to covetouſneſs) that that they were ready to run upon the ſtage, and tear the Actour in pieces, that had ſpoken it: ſtill *Euripides* was faine himſelf, to come out amongſt them, and intreat them, to have patience, and ſee the end: for they ſhould preſently ſee, the riches he ſo exacted, to have ſuch a down-fall in the miſeries of his rich man *Bellerophon*; that it ſhould leave but little liſt in any man, ever after to deſire their company. For the ſpeech (ſaith he) was but to ſhew the Spectatours their own Errour; but the event in Fact, was to ſhew them, the Truth it ſelf.

When an *Actour* preſents himſelf upon the Stage, untill he ſpeak, he is but a *picture*, and when he ſpeaks, he is but a Storie; (and therefore perhaps a Player is called *Hiſtrio*, quaſi *Hiſtorio*) for as one ſayd well, that a Judg is *lex loquens*, *a ſpeaking law*: ſo we may ſay as truly, that a Player, is a ſpeaking Picture: or a Hiſto-

Hiſtorie in perſon; and ſeeing we
ow no hurt, by a Picture; and cannot
t commend Hiſtorie: why ſhould Plays
condemned, which are but a compo-
ion made of theſe two? A Hiſtorie is
t condemned, if recording the life of
lian; it ſet down, his cruelty againſt
riſtians, and his Blaſphemies againſt
riſt. And if an Hiſtorian may law-
lly write it, may not we as lawfully
ad it? and if we may lawfully read it;
ay not a Player as lawfully pronounce
? and what doth a Player elſe, but
nely ſay that without book, which we
ay read within Book? A Player Acts
e part of *Solomon*; but is never the
ſer for acting his part: why ſhould he
e thought the wickeder for acting the
art of *Nero*, or the more blaſphemous
or acting the part of *Porphyrie*? Can
here be a greater Blaſphemy, then to
urſe God? yet *Jobe*'s Wife perſwaded
im to do ſo; and this is written, where
t may be read: ſhall we therefore think
t unlawfull, to read the Story of *Job*?
Can there be a more blaſphemous
ſpeech,

ſpeech, then that which the *Jews* ſp
of *Chriſt*; that he had a *Devil*,
wrought his *miracles*, by *Belzebub* Pri
of the Devils? yet the holy Evangel
have recorded this ſpeech: ſhall
therefore think it unlawfull, to r
their Goſpells? Can there be a m
prophane Speech, then that of the Po
Ede, lude, Bibe: Poſt mortem nulla V
ptas? Yet *Solomon* in his *Eccleſia*
hath ſome ſuch ſpeeches; ſhall
therefore think it unlawfull, to read t
Book of the Preacher? And w
then (if we may *Parvis Componere magn*
ſhall Players be thought, either Bl
phemous, or prophane: if ſometim
they utter ſuch ſpeeches under the pe
ſon of another? and indeed to ſpe
it plainly, they cannot avoid the uſin
and uttering ſuch ſpeeches, if they w
be Players. *For as he, who would live*
pourtray a Devil, or a deformed Monſter
muſt needs draw ſome gaſtly lines, and u
ſome ſordid colours; ſo he, who will deli
niate to the life, the notorious lewdneſs o
people in the world, is neceſſarily enforc

ſuch immodeſt phraſes, as may preſent it its native uglyneſs; elſe he ſhould but con-le, or maſque their horrid wickedneſs, that e may behold it: not rip it open, that all y abhor it: and this is the onely reaſon, of-ſe more uncivil, or ſeemingly immodeſt ſages, that are here, and there, ſcattered this Diſcourſe. But in what Diſcourſe ink ye? even in this very Diſcourſe *Hiſtrio-Maſtix.* For theſe laſt eight nine lines, are his own very words, his Preface to the Reader; to juſtify e Obſcenity, of his own very ſpeech-, which he uſeth in his book. But this poſſible? Hath he then, a Mono-olie of Obſcene phraſes; and immo-eſt ſpeeches, that none may lawfully e any, but only himſelf? may not layers claime the priviledg of ſubjects, the *Engliſh* Tongue, and uſe them pon occaſion, as well as he? No, he ſeth them onely upon neceſſity, to ex-reſs the Obſcenity of Players, and do ot Players uſe them onely upon neceſ-ity, to expreſs the Obſcenity of people? But what neceſſity have Players to med-

dle

dle with the Obſcenity of people? T
ſame neceſſity which he hath, to med
with the Obſcenity of Players. But
could not otherwiſe diſwade men, fr
ſeeing ſnch Obſcene Plays; and Pl
ers cannot otherwiſe diſſwade m
from being ſuch Obſcene perſons. H
may thus go on, as far as he will, b
when all is ſaid; it will ever be foun
either a voluntary Obſcenity in hi
ſelf, or a neceſſary in *Players*: th
every ſchole-boy, that hath but learn
his *Cato*, will be upon his jacket wi
this.

Turpe eſt Doctori quum Culpa redargu
(ipſum

But (*Fol.* 100.) he ſeemes here, t
pleaſe himſelf with a Reaſon; *that*
Plays were good Scholes of Virtue, ho
ſhould it happen, that (*Fol.* 102.) *Player*
and the (*Fol.* 143.) *Frequenters of Play*
are commonly the worſt, and moſt vitious
men? As though there were not many
as honeſt, and wiſe as himſelf, that go
to ſee Plays? I may juſtly ſay as honeſt,
ſeeing no diſhoneſtie is greater, then

to

o condemne men, whom he doth not
now; and I may as juſtly ſay as wiſe,
eing no Follie, is greater, then to be
o buſie, where he hath nothing to do;
nd to be ſo Cenſorious, where he hath
o Authority. But is he ſo fooliſh as
e makes himſelf, to think that good
choles muſt always produce good
cholers? Were there ever better
chole-maſters in Humane Scholes,
hen thoſe which the Emperour *Nero*,
nd *Commodus* had? Yet they both pro-
ed *Monſters* of men, the one in *Laſci-*
iouſneß and *Cruelty*: The other in *Cruel-*
y, and *Laſciviouſneß*. Were there
ver better Schole-maſters in Divine
choles, then thoſe which *Gebezi*, and
udas had? Yet they both proved no-
orious Examples to all *Poſterity*; the
ne of *incredulous Bribery*, the other of
Bribing Incredulity. But though we
keep no Regiſter, of ſuch men, as have
profited in virtue by this Schole of
Plays: yet we are not altogether de-
ſtitute of Examples. For hath not
Lucian Recorded one *Lesbonax*, an ho-
neſt

neſt man of *Mytilene*, who being a gre
Frequenter of Plays, was wont to ſay
himſelf; that *he never ſaw a Play, but*
returned home, a better man then he w
out? And what hath *Cicero* recorded
Roſcius; who was a famous Play
himſelf; and yet no leſs a famous h
neſt man; *Vt cum dignissimus esset Sce*
propter Artificium; *etiam dignissimus*
curia propter abstinentiam. That his
ry Adverſary durſt not ſpeak of him
the Barr, without this Addition, *Q*
honoris causa Nomine. And leſt
ſhould ſay, that the Schole of Play
Degenerated, and grown worſe, ſin
that time; have we not ſeen in our o
time, a famous Scholer come out of t
Schole: *Edward Allen* a Player himſe
Famous as well for his *Honeſty*, as for h
Acting: and who hath left behind hi
a worthy Teſtimony of his *Chriſtian* C
rity, to all poſterity? And who doub
but amongſt the Spectatours of Play
we may finde many, like to *Lesbonax*
and amongſt Players themſelves, ſom
like to *Roſcius*? and even to go no fur
the

er then his own Authours, whom he rings in for witneſſes againſt going to lays; (and we doubt not but he takes em for honeſt men; as *Cicero*, *Seneca*, *linie*, and a number of ſuch beſides) et were they all Frequenters of Plays, y their own confeſſion in their wri-ings: and how then, is he not aſhamed o ſay, that none but *Infamous*, *Unchaſt*, *Prophane*, and *Graceleſs* perſons are fre-uenters of *Plays*: when all his worthy riters, who he cites for his witneſſes, ere themſelves frequenters of them? f their honeſties were ſufficient, to make them ſufficient witneſſes, againſt he lawfullneſs of going to Plays; why are not their Honeſties as ſufficient, to make their Examples ſufficient *Warrants* for going to Plays? and ſo, I may ſay in their Defence, as *Cicero* ſaid in Defence of *Roſcius*; *Niſi eoſdem, & Adverſarios, & Teſtes habeant, nolo vincant*: that there never was poor Book made the Inſtru-ment of ſo impudent a ly, ſo notorious a ſcandal, as this *Hiſtrio-Maſtix*.

But (*Fol.* 142.) will you know, how it

it happens, that *Players, in this Man's account, are moſt exceſſively vitious, unchaſt profane, and diſſolute men?* marry, *becauſe moſt of them (as he is credibly informed) are profeſſed Papiſts.* A very neceſſary *Conſequence:* as though to be a profeſſed *Papiſt*, were to be a profeſſed *Atheiſt*: for what but *Atheiſm* could bring forth all ſuch exceſſively vitious men as he would make them? Yet this makes well for *Plays*, though it makes ill for *Players*: for *Players*, though the moſt exceſſively vitious men, yet are not ſo, becauſe *Players*, but becauſe *Papiſts*. Let him take heed, he pull not an old houſe upon his head; for though *Papiſts* differ from *Proteſtants*, in ſome points of *Moral*, and *Theological* Doctrine, yet they differ not from them in the *neceſſity* of *Moral*, and *Theological* Virtues. Although therefore we do not queſtion his credible *Information*, yet we juſtly queſtion his incredible *Conſequence*: as being indeed a very inconſequent incredibility. If he had onely ſaid, Some *Papiſts* are exceſſively vitious men; though this

is had been a busie impertinent *Asser-*
on; yet I presume, no *Papists* them-
lves would much have gain-said it: for
hat *Religion* was ever known, that had
ot some Professors of it excessively vi-
ous? But, when he saith, *Players* must
eeds be excessively vitious, because
ey are *Papists*, this lays a taint upon
e generality; and makes a *Papist*, and
honest man, to be *Disparata*, and *In-*
patible; as never possible to meet to-
ether in one Person. In which opini-
n (what *Puritans* may do, I know not,
ut) I verily think, scarce one *Protestant*
ill be found to take his part. But we
ay leave *Papists* to defend their ho-
sties, as they can themselves: and
his man, as he can, to oppugn it; we
meddle no further with them, on ei-
her side; but, *Ipsi viderint, Ipse viderit.*

Sufficient hath been spoken in behalf
of *Players* obscene speeches; but these
are scarce one half of their obscenity:
for besides these, (*Fol.* 374.) *There are*
in Plays wanton gestures, amorous kisses, and
complements; and these are the obscene sights,
and

and the great provocations to luſt, for wh
he ſpecially condemns Plays. Grave crim
Caie Cæſar: Kiſſes, and amorous kiſſ
very obſcene ſights, and great provoc
tions to luſt: but why more being do
upon the *Stage*, then done in his ow
houſe? Why more done in *fiction*, the
in *reality*? Why more uſed in *Jeſts*, the
uſed in *earneſt*? Why more ſeen *ſeldom*
then ſeen *continually*? For who ſees n
every ſtranger that comes to his hou
to kiſs both his own, and other me
wives before their faces? yet all do
with *Veſtal* modeſty; and no man ev
heard to complain, but onely this man
as born, it ſhould ſeem, under ſom
very luſtfull, and *jealous Conſtellation*.
And will not even Nature her ſelf, b
this Reaſon, be found guilty of immo-
deſty? for making *Pigeons* to bill open-
ly, and *Cocks* to tread their *Hens* before
mens faces? a ſight, it ſeems, a Brother
cannot ſee, but it preſently ſets his teeth
a water, to be doing the like. But muſt
we not think his *inclination* then a very
dry *Tinder*, and very apt to take fire;

that

hat can be enflamed to luſt with ſo cold rovocations? However it be, this equi- cannot juſtly be denied to *Players*; hat, either this man may not be allowed kiſs, and uſe amorous Complements, hen he goes a Wooing; or they may e allowed to do as much, when they epreſent him a wooing.

But there is yet in *Plays* a worſe mat- r then all theſe; for, (*Fol.* 390) *they re the very places of meetings, where laſci- ious matches are oftentimes made, and metimes acted.* But ſhould not laſcivi- us perſons have very ill harbours, if hey had not better Ports to arrive t, then to meet at a *Play-houſe?* And hy *Plays* more then *Fairs*, and *Mar- kets?* why *Plays*, more then confluence at *Marriages*, and other *Feſtivals?* why *Plays* more, then frequenting of one an- other's *Houſes?* and what ſaith a *Poët*; Why *Plays* more, then even goings to *Church* it ſelf?

Quis locus eſt Templis auguſtior? hæc quoque (vitet,
In culpam ſi qua eſt ingenioſa ſuam.

And, it ſeems indeed, where *Play-*

houſes were ſo bad, that *Temples* wer
no better; as *Minutius Felix* ſaith: *U
magis à Sacerdotibus, quàm inter Aras,
Delubra, condicuntur ſtupra? tractantur
nocinia? Adulteria meditantur? Freque
tiùs denique in Ædituorum Cellulis, quàm
ipſis Lupanaribus, flagrans libido defun
tur.* And what marvel, if the *Heath*
uſed in *Plays* ſuch *Obſcenities*, who ac
counted ſuch *Obſcenities* to be but *Play*
as little caring in ſuch things to ſeem
honeſt, as to be; but this is not the Caſe
of *Chriſtians*, who, though never ſo *irr
gular*, will yet obſerve this Rule; *Si no
caſtè, tamen cautè*, If not chaſtly, yet
charily. And what caution were in this,
to offer *laſcivious ſpeeches*, where all mens
Ears; or *laſcivious acts*, where all mens
Eyes are continually upon them? as if
a *Thief* ſhould ſteal in the open ſtreet,
where all men ſee him? (*Fol.* 387.) He
tells of *Heliogabalus*, that he commanded
Stage-Players, to commit *Adulteries*, real-
ly, and openly upon the *Stage*: he tells
of *Tiberius*, that he cauſed others to de-
file themſelves before his face. And
why

why tells he these filthy tales, but onely for the pleasure he takes in telling them? or else, how far are they from the Matter, in speaking of our *Plays?* when he sees any such acts committed upon our *Stages*, let him not spare to tell us of it: till then, he may leave his gabling of *Heliogabalus*, and keep his filthy Stories in store for the private delight of his own meditation.

He hath hitherto maintained himself with the *Obscenity* of *Plays*; but now, that the Patrimony of that *Argument* is spent, and gone, you shall presently see how bare, and beggarly he will grow, and for very necessity fall a pilfering. For, his very next *Argument* is directly stolen, where he makes (*Fol.* 72.) *Plays unlawfull, because they are bloody, and tyrannical, breathing nothing but Malice, Anger, and Revenge*; for this belongs properly to the Spectacles of *Gladiators*, and *Fencers*, and not to *Plays*; unless perhaps, to *Heathen Plays*, where men, and sometimes *Christian* men, were cast in amongst wilde Beasts to be devoured;

voured; but, what is this to our *Plays* where never any wilde Beaſt was ſeen upon the Stage, unleſs perhaps ſuch wilde Beaſts as *David* ſpeaks of, who are like to *Horſe*, and *Mule, that have no Underſtanding.*

He hath another very Thrifty Reaſon; by which he would make us think him a good husband for us; (*Fol.* 302. and 310.) *where he condemns Plays, becauſe they make their Spectatours ſpend ſo much money, and time in ſeeing them.* But what will *French-men* ſay in defence of their Recreation? Who ſpend more mony, and time in one day at *Tennis*; then theſe Spectatours do in many weeks at Plays? and how comes it, that ſeeing he aimes onely at cheap recreations, he forgets the Emperour *Domitian*'s Recreations; who made it his ſport, to ſpend an hour in the Afternoon, in catching of *Flies*? For as for thoſe, which he allowes of, *Fiſhing*, and *Fowling*; *Hunting*, and *Hawking*: the very Fable of *Actæon* would make him ſee his Errour, if he had the will

to

o underſtand the *Moral*. But how an we think him a good husband for s: who is ſo bad a husband for himelf? for what a deal of mony, and ime hath he ſpent in Tranſcribing of *Authours*, and Printing his Book: which, if man ſhould ſay, had been better ſpent t Plays, though he perhaps would be ngry: yet as wiſe men as himſelf, I erily think, would be of that opinion.

He hath another Argument, which he ſeems to have borrowed from the *Heathens Bacchanalia*: where (*Fol.* 508.) *he makes Plays unlawfull, becauſe they are an immediate occaſion of Drunkenneſs, and Exceſs.* It was indeed uſual at thoſe Feaſts, to Surfet, and be Drunk; or rather Surfeting, and Drunkenneſs were the *Feaſt* it ſelf: but who ever ſaw a man Surfet, or be Drunk at a Play? and how can that be an occaſion of Drunkenneſs, which neither miniſters Example, nor Means of Drinking? No Example; unleſs perhaps in Fiction: and then not ſo much, to repreſent men Drunk with *Wine*, as this man with *Errour*.

He

He hath an other *Argument*, which he ſeems to have been looking in a Glaſs when he made it: It reflects ſo directly upon himſelf: (*Fol.* 501:) *where he makes Plays Unlawfull: becauſe they are the conſtant cauſe of much Sloth, and Idleneſs.* For what greater Idleneſs, then to ſit all day, tranſcribing of *Authours*; which is but *Actum Agere?* But ſhould he not by this Argument have concluded rather the *Gowt* to be unlawfull? of which, when one was asked, what Idleneſs was the worſt, he anſwered: *Podagrici Pedes*, the *Gout in the Feet?* Indeed to ſee a *Play* as he (it ſeems, reads Books, to look onely in their Tables) it might not be much better; but to ſee a *Play*, with that due obſervation, which the true uſe of *Plays* requires, he will finde it, as farr from Idleneſs to be at a *Play*, as to be at Schole: and Scholers would take it in great dudgeon, if he ſhould ſay, they were Idle, when they are at their Books. But what ſaith *Attilius* in *Pliny*: *Præſtat otioſum eſſe quàm Nihil agere*: as much as to ſay, *It were better*

better to be at a Play, and be Idle: then to sit Scribling out of Authours, and do nothing.

He hath another Argument, with which, it seems, he seeks to cheat us: where (*Fol.* 515.) *he makes Plays unlawfull; because Play-houses are the Scholes, and Plays the Lectures, to teach men, how to Cheat, and Steal.* For, Who knows not, that *Theevs, and Cheatours, can have their Scholing for nothing*; and need not to pay for it, by going to *Plays!* Indeed, a farr cunninger Schole-master they have to teach them the Craft, then *Players*; one that is in *Earneſt*; and would take it ill at their hands, that they ſhould take any ill in hand, which they had not from him. But doth not this Reaſon, through the ſides of *Plays*, give greater wounds, to *Aſſizes*, and *Seſſions*? For there indeed, the plots, and practizes of *Theevery*, the tricks, and conveyances of *Cheatours*, are openly laid open, and publikly made known: that if he call it a *Schole*, certainly they are *Free-Scholes*: or rather *Academies* in compariſon of *Plays*. But who knows not

not, that both *Plays*, and *Seſſions*, diſcover *Thefts*, and *Cheatings* indeed, but not as this man would *cheat* us; and make us think, to the end, they may be uſed, but as *Logick* teaches *fallacies*, to the end to avoid them. We may juſtly therefore for this reaſon, binde him over to the *Seſſions*, both for the *implicite aſperſion* he lays upon them, and for the *explicite cheating*, he ſeeks to put upon us.

He hath another *Argument*, which we may call his *Rain-bow*, ſeeing there are as many Vices in it, as there are Colours in the *Rain-bow*; (*Fol.* 551.) *where he makes Plays unlawfull; becauſe they occaſion an apparent breach of all the ten Commandments*, of which we may ſay, *Decem mundi facti ſunt; ſed ubi ſunt illi novem?* for ſome ſins are incompatible; that where one is familiar, the other will always be a ſtranger, unleſs he mean it as St. *James* ſpeaks; *that he which is guilty of one ſin, is guilty of all:* and in that ſenſe, we may ſay as much of him, when he doth but onely tell a Lie. This man, with a little help, would bring it about,

that

that the very ſin of our firſt Parent *Eve* was nothing elſe, but her being a *Player*, where ſhe and the *Serpent* were the *Actours*, and *Adam* the *Spectatour*; and not onely that all *Players* are damned, but that none elſe are damned but they. For, if *Players* break all God's Commandments, then he, who is no *Player*, breaks none of the Commandments: as when *Æſop*'s fellow, being asked what he could do, anſwered, He could do all things; then ſaith *Æſop*, If he can do all things, there is nothing left for me to do. You will ſay, This is not to anſwer, but to trifle; and hath not *Solomon* adviſed us, *Anſwer not a fool in his folly, leſt thou be like unto him?* yet, ſeeing we have anſwered his *Arguments* before, where he charged *Plays* with the *Vices* in particular, it may well enough ſerve for an anſwer to this *Argument*, where he chargeth them in general: and ſo we obſerve alſo the other Precept of *Solomon*, (fellow to the former) *Anſwer a fool in his folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit.*

You

You have heard many grave *Arguments*, you ſhall hear one now, to make you laugh, (*Fol.* 291.) where he makes *Plays unlawfull, becauſe they provoke oftentimes profuſe laughter*, as though he knew not, that to be *riſible* is onely proper to men; and no exceſs in this can taint them with aſperſion of any beaſtlike quality, or make them, as all vices do, and this ſhould, if it were a vice, to be like a Beaſt. And eſpecially he is not well adviſed in this, in his own behalf; for if it were not for this *Riſible*, we ſhould hardly, perhaps, finde any thing in himſelf, to know him to be a man. But why ſhould he blame *Plays* for provoking of Laughter, when he makes an *Argument* here himſelf, that provokes more laughter then ever any *Play* did? that we may truly ſay, *Omnes qui audiunt riſu emori*. For what was ever heard more *ridiculous*, then to make it an *Argument* againſt *Plays*, (*f.* 714.) *becauſe* Noah, Melchiſedech, Abraham, *and the* Patriarchs *are never read in Scripture, to have approved Plays?* Or, as his Elegancy expreſſeth

expresseth it, *to have been experimentally acquainted with them?* As absurdly, as if one would prove, that *Guns* are no good weapons in the *Wars*, because *Joshua*, *Gideon*, *David*, and the antient *Warriours* are never read in Scripture, to have used *Guns*, or to have been *experimentally* acquainted with them; much like the foolishness, which *Livie* notes in a *Roman Tribune*, who threatned the people, he would hinder their levying of Souldiers, when there was no *War* toward; and, Is there not in this, as just cause to set *Marcus Crassus* a laughing, as when he saw an *Asse eat Thistles?*

He hath another *Reason*, as vain, and ridiculous as this; (*Fol.* 127.) *where he makes it a Reason to condemn Plays, because they are at the best, but vain, and ridiculous.* As though any thing of this world, even the best things that are, when they are at the best, were any other, then *vain*, and *ridiculous*; and let him not distinguish of things, and say, that some are *serious*; for the more *serious*, the more *ridiculous*: for what is this, but the very

Argument,

Argument, at which *Democritus* could no forbear laughing, all his life time.

But theſe are but the ſmall *Fry* of h great *Pool*; he hath three *Reaſon* which, like the great *Pikes*, may be ſa to contain in their Bellies all his othe *Gudgin-Reaſons*: and in the taking o them conſiſts, in effect, the taking awa of all the other. And may we not ad mit them all to be true, and yet, as ou caſe is, take no Diſparagement, by ad mitting them? ſeeing, as he urge them againſt *Plays*: ſo we may urg them as well againſt no worſe a thin then *Riches*. For his *firſt* Reaſon ma be this; (*Fol.* 327.) that *Plays are a pro vocation unto Luſt*: and is it not ſaid o Riches, that they are *Irritamenta mal rum?* His *ſecond*: that *Plays* (*Fol.* 521. *Indiſpoſe men to all Religious Duties*: an is it not ſaid of Riches; that *we cann ſerve God, and Mammon?* His *third*: tha (*Fol.* 565.) *they bring Damnation, upo mens Souls, and Bodies*; and, Is it not ſai of a Rich man, that he cannot *Enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?* and why

then

en ſhould he think to fright us with
s Thundring phraſes, from ſeeing of
lays, and is not himſelf frighted with
em, from ſeeking of Riches? Cer-
inly, ſeeing all his Reaſons are as
rong againſt Riches, as againſt *Plays*,
nd yet Riches we doubt not, may be
ad, and held by good men; why may
ot *Plays* alſo be Acted, and be beheld
y good men, notwithſtanding his rea-
ons? For, as there may be *Bonus uſus
Divitiarum*, which makes void all the
reaſons againſt Riches; ſo there may
be *Bonus uſus Ludorum*, which may a-
void all his Reaſons againſt *Plays*:
that unleſs he can prove it is not lawful
to be Rich, we ſhall never admit his
proofs, that it is not lawfull to ſee a
Play; let him therefore, either allow
men to ſee a *Play*, as well as to be
Rich: or, if he will perſwade men not
to ſee *Plays*; let him then write another
Book, and perſwade all men to be
Beggars.

Plutarch writ a Book *De Utilitate ab
Inimicis Capienda*,, and if this man had

the good meaning of *Plutarch*, and has written his Book, *de Utilitate à Spectaculis Capienda*; we might then perhaps have thought him, as *Charitable*, as now we think him *Malicious*. But if he be not a *Manichee*, he is, at leaſt, very like one; who ſeems he could finde in his Heart, to blame God for Creating of *Vipers*, and ſuch other *Venemous Beaſts*; becauſe his groſs Head is not able to conceive, how the ſoveraign *Antidote* of *Treacle* ſhould be extracted from them.

And now, to make a Recapitulation of his Arguments, to ſee, how he hath laboured all this while, *De lana caprina*; *about a matter of nothing*, and how eaſily his main blows may be avoided with one ward, he ſaith, *Plays* are *bloody* and *Tyrannical*. It may be true of *Heathen Plays*, it is falſe of ours: He ſaith they are a *provocation to Luſt*; It may be true of *Heathen Plays*, it is falſe of ours: He ſaith they are Ordained, and Dedicated to the Worſhip of *Devil-Gods*; it is true of *Heathen Plays*, it is falſe of

of ours. He ſaith, they are the *Pomps* of the *Devil*, renounced by *Chriſtians* in their *Baptiſm*: It may be true of *Heathen Plays*, it is falſe of ours. He ſaith, they are fraught with bitter *Scoffings* at Religion, and Religious men; it may be true of *Heathen Plays*, it is falſe of ours. He ſaith, they cauſe a prodigal Expence of *Time*, and *Mony*; it may be true of *Heathen Plays* (which laſted many times, many daies together, and were ſet forth at Infinite charges) it is falſe of ours. He ſaith, they are an immediate occaſion of much *Actual Adultery*; it may be true of *Heathen Plays*, it is falſe of ours. He ſaith, they occaſion much *Drunkenneſs*, and *Exceſs*; it may be true of *Heathen Plays*, it is falſe of ours. And thus, to his *Diverſis Nodis, Vnus Cuneus*, many arguments, as he calls them, one anſwer, as a wedg, may ſerve ſufficiently, to cleave them all aſunder.

Yet he hath one paſſage, that ſtands barking in a Corner, but dares not come out in the likeneſs of an Argument, where he calls (*Fol.* 329.) *Playhouſes*, the

the Seminaries of Vices; the Temples of Venery; the Scholes of Bawdery; the Dens of Lewdneſs; and all the Vile names he could get together, by raking *Hel*, and *Billings-gate*. But will it not be a Sop to ſtop *Cerberus* his mouth: if we do but examine the Common-Wealths, in which *Plays* have been moſt uſual; whether, after *Plays* admitted, they have grown in their manners, either not worſe, or perhaps better; for ſo it may appear, that *Plays* have been no ſuch corruptions, no ſuch corrupters of the times, as he would make them. Examine the *Roman* State; and, not to wander about, take the times under the Emperour *Auguſtus*, in which, *Plays* where in their heighth: he Reigned ſix and Fifty years; a reaſonable time to make a tryal: and were not his times, more quiet, more civil, and more virtuous, then ever they had been before? So quiet, that all the world was quiet, and the *Temple* of *Janus* ſhut up twice in his time? So civil, and virtuous, that as himſelf was call *Auguſtus*; ſo his times were

were called *Augustum Sæculum*. Come to our own *Country*, which is better known to us; take the *Time* from the beginning of our late *famous* Queen *Elizabeth*, to the present, almost fourscore years, a large time likewise for probation; and were ever any Times known in this *State* more *Civil*, or more *Virtuous*? so *civil*, that no *civil Arms*; so *virtuous*, that *Justice*, never more duly administred; *Sermons* never more Preached, more frequented; *Virtues* in *Princes* never more transcendent, *Loyaltie*, and *Love* in *Subjects* never more eminent; that if *Virgil* might say it of *Augustus* Times; certainly, we much more justly may say it of these of ours;

Jam redit, & virgo; redeunt Saturnia Regna,

As if the *Golden-Age*, of which the *Poets* talk such wonders, were come into the world again. And how then are *Plays* such Seminaries of *Vices*, as he talks of? He must find better Seminaries then *Plays*, or he is like to have but a slender crop. That we may know

theſe Phraſes of his, to be nothing but the *Fictions* of the Devil's *Poetry*, or the *Flowers* of his *Rhetorick*. He will ſay, they are the very words of *Tertullian*, and other of the *Fathers*; but will he never learn this one leſſon ſo often taught him; *They may be true of Heathen Plays, they are falſe of ours.* He will laſtly ſay, that we have ſpoken indeed of general, and publike *Virtues*, but they are the *Vices* of private men, that he complains of; as though the publick were any thing, but the uniting of the private; or the generall any thing, but the meeting of particulars: and who doubts, but there will be a *Cham* in the *Ark*; though *Noah* the Preacher of *Righteouſneſs* be continually in preſence? there will be a *Judas* amongſt the *Apoſtles*, though *Chriſt* himſelf be doing his *Miracles* continually before them? But ſhould not this man conſider rather, from whence theſe men took their infection (which from *Plays*, we are ſure they did not) then to ſtand baiting at *Plays*, which is at moſt, but *Cum capiti medendum eſt, Reduviam*

uviam curare; for, to think to mend mens *Vices* by taking away *Plays*, is as dle, as that one ſhould think to mend *l Faces*, by taking away *Glaſſes*.

He hath yet one *Argument* behinde; hich is, I may ſay, his *Palmarium*; and hich he hath kept for a final *Argument*, becauſe it muſt ſerve to give a final blow to beat down *Plays:* namely, *(Fol. 552.) The fearfull judgments of God, hich have been ſhewed upon them.* A final *Argument* indeed, able to beat down, not onely *Plays*, but all mens *Hearts* from ſeeing of *Plays*. But where is his *Commiſſion*, to make the *Application*? It is, no doubt, good counſel, when any *extraordinary* fearfull *accident* happens, to call our ſelves to *account*, and to enter into a due *conſideration* of all our *miſs-doings*; acknowledging, that ſuch things are oftentimes ſent of God, as gracious warnings to draw us to *Repentance*; but yet, when ſuch things happen, to cenſure them preſently, as Judgments of God upon any *particular Sins* and to determine upon what *particular Sin*, or

Sinner they are ſent; this is more then this man hath warrant for, either from *Scripture*, or *Fathers*, or from *Diſcretion*. When God reveals the reaſon of his doing, we may ſafely then take notice of it, and reſt our ſelves upon it; as when the *Earth* opened, and ſwallowed up *Korah*, and *Dathan*; there was manifeſtly known, both the *particular Sin*, and the *particular Sinners*: Likewiſe when *Fire* fell down from *Heaven* upon *Sodom*, and *Gomorrha*. But when the *Tower* of *Shilo* fell, and with the fall, ſlew eighteen men, who could make the application? ſeeing *Chriſt* ſaith, They were not the worſt men, upon whom the *Tower* of *Shilo* fell. When a childe was born dumb, and blinde, this man would preſently, it ſeems, have cenſured it, as a Judgment of *God*, upon the *Childe*, or *Parent*; yet *Chriſt* told his Diſciples, It neither came for any *Sin* of the *Childe*, nor of the *Parents*. For the *Judgments* of God, are as ſecret, as fearfull; they are an *Abyſs*, till he give them a bottom; and where God keeps *ſilence*, there men

can

can have no *ſcience*. For, what man is he, that can know the *counſel* of God; or, who can think what his *Will* is? He tells us of *Play-houſes*, both publick, and private; ſome ſuddenly fallen down, ſome burnt up with fire, without any apparent cauſe preceding? And what great wonder is this; if in ſo many hundred years, in ſo many thouſand places, ſome few ſuch *accidents* have ſometimes happened? Have not the like happened even to *Churches*, and *Chappels*; and *private places* of *Religious meetings*? Will he therefore ſay, they were *Judgments* of God againſt the uſe of *Churches*, and *Chappels*? he tells us of ſome *Players*, and ſome *Spectatours* of *Plays*, that have died at the very *Play*, both ſuddenly, and ſtrangely; and what great wonder is this, if in ſo many hundred years, in ſo many thouſand places, amongſt ſo many millions of people, ſome few ſuch chances have ſometimes fallen out? Have not the like happened to ſome *Preachers* in the *Pulpit*; and to ſome devout perſons, even at their *prayers*?

prayers? Will he therefore ſay, they were Judgments of God, againſt the uſe of *Preaching*, and *Praying*? How much better, is that cenſure in *Minutius Fœlix*: *Fulmina paſſim cadunt; ſine delectu tangunt loca ſacra, & prophana: homines noxios feriunt, ſæpe & Religioſos: Thunder-bolts fall down indifferently; they light upon places prophane, and ſacred, without any choice; they ſtrike good men, and bad, both alike.* His Inference therefore of theſe *Judgments*, ſhews he hath no *Judgment*, being as idle as buſie, and proceeding rather, from a malice to the cauſe, then from any underſtanding of theſe effects, and as little from any *Charitie* at all to the Reader.

Thus this *final* Argument, which ſhould have made a *final* End of *Plays*, hath made a *final* End of all his *Reaſons*, and of all his *Reaſon*: and yet he hath one *Argument* more, though not one *Reaſon* more, but a kind of *prognoſtication* rather, for he tells, before hand, (*Fol. 565.*) *what entertainment, both Players, and Spectatours of Plays, are like to finde in another world, even without Repentance*

…tance, Eternal Damnation. And this …e calls *an Argument, with a witneſs*: and …is ſo indeed, for it is a witneſs to us …f his *raſhneſs*, and *irreligion.* For, he …eſies being a *Papiſt*, and he denies …eing a *Puritan*; and now this Argu…ent, is a witneſs againſt him, that he … no *Proteſtant.* For by aggravating …e ſin (as he accompts it) of ſeeing a …lay, being not *Repented*, with Eternal …amnation: he ſhews himſelf to think, …at every Sin not Repented, deſerves …ot ſo much: for if he thought Eternal …amnation, the common puniſhment, …f every ſin, why ſhould he lay it, as an …ggravating puniſhment upon this …n? and if he think, Some ſin not Re…ented, not to be *Mortal*, we think him, …or ſo thinking, not to be a *Proteſtant.* …f then, neither *Proteſtant*, nor *Puritan*, …or *Papiſt*: what *Religion* ſhould he be of, …hat we may not juſtly leave the *Damna…ion* of this Argument, upon himſelf? …And thus it befalls men, tranſported …with malice, that whileſt they make, their …own *threatning*, the meaſure of others

ſuffering

ſuffering; they fall them ſelves to ſ
fer that, which they threatned to othe

Thus you have ſeen his *Fore-par*
which are his *Reaſons*; you may now
pleaſed to ſee his *Back-parts*, which
his *Teſtimonies*, and *Authorities*; and y
ſhall finde him no better to follow th
he was to meet; yet it makes a bett
ſhew; for he began his *Reaſons* fro
the *Devil*, but he begins his *Authorit*
from *God*: for (*Fol.* 545) he begi
with the *Scriptures*, the *word* of *God*: n
doubt, a moſt *powerfull evidence*, not t
be ſpoken of without honour; not t
be thought of, without *reverence*: an
indeed, if he could alledg but onely th
name of *Plays*, or *Players*, as ſpoken o
in the *Scriptures*, we ſhould have a won
derfull reſpect, and be wouderfull ci
cumſpect how we medled with them
but ſeeing he cannot do this, we ma
juſty ſuſpect him to be no better a ma
in his *Authorities*, then he was in his *Rea*
ſons, great *pretences*, but no *proofs*, fai
colours, but no *ſubſtance*; all he can ſay,
is but onely to ſay, he hath nothing bu
word

ords, and words are but winde, and ay well enough be blown over. For, for his *Inferences*, and *Collections*, and *eductions*, we may demur upon them at aſure, and take time to conſider. But ſt any man ſhould think we waved his *eſtimonies* of *Scripture*, as being con-ncing, and ſuch as cannot be anſwer-d; let us, for the *reverence* we bear em, hear him at large, and ſee what he ath to ſay out of theſe ſacred Records. nd he ſeems to bewray the weakneſs f his *Cauſe* at the very firſt: for, (*Fol.* 45.) *he grants that Scripture ſpeaks no-hing againſt Plays in preciſe terms*; and hy then will he condemn them in pre-iſe terms, if the *Scripture* do not? Is ot this to incur the reprehenſion of *So-omon*, *Noli eſſe nimium juſtus?* be not oo preciſe; for to condemn a thing n preciſe terms, which the *Scriptures* do not, what is this, but to be *ni-mium juſtus*; more preciſe then needs? But if the *Scriptures* condemn them not in preciſe terms, in what terms then? In-deed onely in *Hilary Term*; for it would

make

make a man merrie; or rather it would make a *Horse* break his halter to see the ſtrange *Antick faces* of applications he makes, to wring out a condemnation of *Plays* from places of *Scripture*; and when he hath all done, we might make as good an *Argument* and ſay; This man ſpeaks ſcarce a wiſe word in all his *book*: Therefore *Plays* are unlawfull: For whereſoever he findes any place againſt *Idolatry*, and *Altars*, againſt *Adultery*, or *Murther*, aganſt *wantonneſs*, or *prophaneneſs*, he preſently applies them as ſpoken againſt *Plays*, & never conſiders how idle, and ſimple he is, to ſtand picking, and culling out ſome certain *Texts* of *Scripture*; when if theſe applications, would ſerve, he might have ſaid it in a *word*, that all the whole *Scripture* is nothing elſe, but a very arraignment, & condemnation of *Plays*. But thus he fetches it about; he confeſſeth that no *Scripture* condemns *Plays*, in preciſe terms; but that (*Fol.* 546.) *they poſitively prohibit, and cenſure them, under the names of Idolatry, of things conſecrated to Idols, of the Cup, and*

Table

Table of Devils; of the Customs, Rites, and delights of Idolaters; of the way and fashion of the Heathen; of the will of the Gentiles, and such like; under which, Plays *are as really, and absolutely compriſed, as any part is under the whole, or any Species under its proper Genus.* A very fine device, to make *Quidlibet, ex Quolibet.* He ſeems one of that mans Scholers, who deduceth, and findes compriſed, all Natural, and Moral Philoſophie in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*; but will any man believe him? The *Fathers* ſaid this of *Heathen* Plays, and he, good man, thinks he may ſay it of ours; will not therefore his device ſuit better with himſelf, and give us leave to ſay; No *Scripture* indeed condemns this man in preciſe terms; but they condemn, and cenſure him under the names of a falſe *Prophet*, of a *perverter* of *Scriptures*; of one, *Zealous without knowledge*; of a *Sycophant*, a *Buſie-body*, a *Slanderer*, and ſuch like; under which names, this man is as really and abſolutely compriſed, as any *part* is under the *whole*, or any *individuum*

dnum under its proper *ſpecies*. And when we ſay this, can any man ſay, but that our application of theſe to him, is far more juſt, then his to *Plays*? Certainly the *Heathen*, have more colour of reaſon, to worſhip the *Sun*, out of the Text *Et Domino Soli ſervies*; then this man hath to condemne *Plays*, out of any Text, againſt the Idolatrie of the *Heathen*. For they at leaſt, have the ambiguity of the word *Soli*, to ſtand upon; but this man hath nothing *Intus* or *Cute*, neither *Ambiguitie* nor *perſpicuity* of word, neither letter nor tittle of letter to Countenance his Expoſition. There are indeed ſome Rules, by which, one vice may be compriſed under the name of another; as when leſſer vices are forbidden, it ſhews the greater are forbidden alſo: ſo *inceſt*, and *Sodomitry* under the name of *Adultery*, ſo *Atheiſm*, under the name of *Heatheniſm*: or when a *General* vice is prohibited, it ſhews the *particular* kinds are prohibited alſo: ſo *poiſoning* under the name of *Murther*; ſo *Bribery*, and *Fraud*, under the name

Stealing; but can he ſhew, that *Plays* e by any ſuch Rules compriſed under e names of the vices he alledgeth? No- ing leſs: if he had done, or could do is, he had ſpoken to ſome purpoſe, nd with ſome reaſon; but ſince he ath not, nor cannot do this, what can e ſay of him, but that he hath ſhewed ore *Malice* then *Wit*, more *Zeal* then *nowledg*, more *Boldneſs*, or *Imprudence*, en either *Judgment*, or *Underſtanding*. e had read perhaps in ſome Authours ome ſtrange applications of places of *cripture*; and he, like a true *Pythagore-n*, takes all upon the Credit of *Ipſe ixit*: and thereupon grows confi- ent at laſt to be a Coyner of Applica- ions himſelf: he thinks he hath as uch Zeal as they; and knows, he ath leſs Knowledg: and theſe two joyn- d together, much Zeal, and little Know- edg, are the true *Parents* of all theſe falſe *himerical* Applications. Would any man hink, that theſe words of *David*; *Bleſſed is he man, that hath not walked in the council of he ungodly: and hath not ſtood in the way of ſinners:*

ſinners: and hath not ſate in the chair of ſcor-
ers, were ſpoken by him, as againſt going
to *Plays*? Yet *Tertullian* fetcheth it about
and takes advantages of ſome *Circumſtan-*
ces, to make it ſeem probable. But may
not *Tertullian* be as well miſtaken in ap-
plying places of *Scripture* againſt *Plays*,
as he was in *applying* them to maintain the
Errour of the *Millenaries*: or the *Corporeity*
of the Soul? Although for this place per-
haps we may excuſe him; ſeeing he ſeems
to apply it, by way of Alluſion, and Ex-
ageration onely, and not by way of *Ar-*
gumentation: in which ſence, while this
man miſtakes it; it is one of the Seeds
he takes to ſet in the *Wilderneſs* of his
Brains: and from this, and ſuch other
miſtaken Seeds is grown at laſt this
huge Foreſt of Confuſion, which he
preſents you with in this his Volumi-
nous *Rhapſodie*: Voluminous indeed,
if you look on the bulk; but a very
Pamphlet, if on the ſubſtance.

But is it not ſtrange to ſee, how con-
fidently he goes to *Moſes* to fetch Texts,
as it were Warrants againſt *Plays*; as if

he

he were ſure, that *Plays* were then in uſe, n *Moſes* his time? For if they were not, he would make *Moſes* a very haſtie *Judg*, to condemn them before they were born. And indeed unleſs where he learned, that the *Devil* invented them, he can learn alſo, at what time he *Invented* them; I will never believe, but he is much miſtaken in the time of their *Nativity*. Eſpecially ſeeing his *Rabbi Tertullian* fetcheth the greateſt Antiquity of *Plays* but from the coming of *Tyrrhenus*, and the *Lydians*, into *Italie*: (for when they were called *Ludi à Lydis*) and *Tyrrhenus* came into *Italie* ſome diſtance of time, after the *Trojane* War; and the *Trojane* War was four hundred years, and more, after *Moſes* Death. Now, ſeeing the places, which this man citeth out of *Moſes*, were Exhortations to the people, to avoid the *Idolatries*, and *Cuſtomes* of the *Heathen*, that were at that time; how can they be taken, as intended againſt *Plays*, which had no being in the world till many hundred years after?

But this may pass among his Venial faults: he thinks, perhaps, that God will never charge him with Errours in *Chronologie*; so they exceed not a *Thousand* years: because a *Thousand* years with him are *but as one day*. Yet it were not enough neither to say, that *Plays* were then in use; but he must prove also, they were then in use, in such manner as now they are; for, if since that time they have mended their manners, it were no reason, that, having lived so long, they should now be put to death in their *Age* for faults committed so long since in their *Infancie*. But if they be of so great *Antiquity*, it is very probable they are of as great *Innocency*; for having had many *Accusations*, they have pass'd many *Trials*: and though often *Arraigned*, yet never *Convicted*: and they should have very hard fortune, if, having stood the blows of so many *axes*, they should now be felled with the cut of a *pen-knife*.

But, seeing he will needs be going to *Moses* for Proofs, let him go, and let us see what he can make of them; and

that

that every *Reader* may be a *Judge*, I will cite you ſome of his places, which he takes to be *poſitively* ſpoken of *Plays*; and I will cite them, as he *Quotes* them, leſt you ſhould think I take advantage; the reſt I will Quote onely, that you may read them at leiſure; and *laugh, if you can, for anger, or be angry, if you can, for laughing.* (*Fol* 545.) Levit. xviii. 30. *Therefore ye ſhall keep mine Ordinances* (*namely, againſt Inceſts, and Sodomitries*) *that ye do not any of the abominable cuſtoms, which have been done before you, and that ye defile not your ſelves therein.* This is the firſt of his places, which he alledgeth as *poſitively* condemning *Plays*. Would any man think he were in *earneſt?* But hear another, Deut. vii. 2. *And the* LORD *thy God ſhall give the Nations before thee, then thou ſhalt ſmite them; thou ſhalt make no Covenant with them, nor take compaſſion on them.* This is another of his places, that *poſitively* condemns *Plays*. And about ſome ten (*Deut.* xii. 3. & xx. 16. *Joſh.* vii. 12. & xi. 12. *Judg.* ii. 2. *Numbers*

bers xxxii. 52. *Pſal.* xvi. 4. *Jerem.* x. 2.) more he hath of like ſcantling; and come no nearer to touch *Plays*, or *Players*, then theſe do. But theſe are out of the *Old Teſtament*: no doubt, he hath better out of the *New*; hear therefore ſome of them too. *Acts* xvi. 20. *But that we write unto them, that they abſtain from filthineſs of Idols, and Fornication, and from things ſtrangled, and from blood.* And is not this ſtill worſe, and worſe? Yet hear another, *Rom.* xii. 2. *And faſhion not your ſelves like unto the world; but be ye changed by the renewing of your mindes, that ye may prove what is the good will of God:* and about ſome twenty places more of like pregnancie againſt *Plays*. Would any man think he were well in his *Wits*, to alledge theſe places as ſpoken againſt *Plays*? But what ſhould he do? he muſt either take theſe, or none; that we may juſtly ſay, The *Devil* certainly owed him a Shame, that put into his head, to take upon him the handling of this *Argument*; and it is indeed, as a moſt learn'd man, and moſt reverend *Divine* of our

Time

Time writes, that this man, and such as he, make the *Scripture* ſpeak what they pleaſe; deriving ſtrange *Poſitions*, and *Paradoxes* thence; when they, and their *Bibles* are alone in corners. But it is plain enough to ſee his crafty dealing; for he *Quotes* indeed theſe places, but he cites not one of them: for he well knew, if he had brought them to the *Bar* as witneſſes againſt *Plays*, they muſt have ſtood mute; for not one of them could have ſpoken a word in *diſparagement* of *Plays*.

But you may hear him crying out, that he alledgeth theſe places, but as others have alledged them before; and have we not heard *Cicero* long ſince crying out, that *no Opinion is ſo abſurd, which hath not ſome Philoſopher for a Patron?* But he hath conſent, as though there were not as well *Fratres in Errore*, as *Fratres in Malo*. But he hath conſent of Times, as though the ſtream of *Invectives* ſet once a running, upon juſt cauſe, may not continue running a long time after the Cauſe removed? And that which reach-

eth to them all, as though places of *Scripture* may not by way of Alluſion, and Exaggeration, be applied to many purpoſes, to which yet, by way of direct *Argumentation*, they cannot be applied? Well, he hath now done with *Scripture*, but he had done better, if he had never begun: for is it not a ſhame, he ſhould make them a ſtale, and bring them in for witneſſes, when they have nothing to ſay; or rather indeed ſhould ſuborn them to become falſe witneſſes; and make them ſay that they never intended?

But though you take his *Bible* from him, yet he hath other very ſtrong *Records*, that are able of themſelves to carry it. (*Fol.* 570.) he hath fifty four *Councels*, whereof every one hath divers *Canons*, all to be *diſcharged* in the very *faces* of *Plays*, and cannot chooſe, but ſhiver them all in pieces. No doubt, the *Engines* are ſtrong; but doth he not miſs-take the Mark? for, if we mark it, we ſhall finde them not levelled at our kinde of *Plays*, but at *Pagan* Idolatrous

rous *Plays*, (wherein, as *Balſamon* ſaith, there were *Maledicta*, & *Blaſphemiæ*, beſides many Superſtitions) and addreſſed chiefly to reſtraint of them upon *Sundays*, for the time; (ſo the ſixty fourth *Canon* of the *Council* of *Carthage*) In *Churches*, for the place; (ſo *Concilium Trecenſe*) to *Church-men*, for the Perſons; (ſo the five and twentieth *Canon* of the *Apoſtles*) But here he would take upon him to be an Interpreter by himſelf; and (*Fol.* 647.) make us believe; *that, though the Canon ſpeak onely of Church-men; yet the equity of the Canon reacheth to all other men.* But what ſaith the old Interpreter *Balſamon*? By forbiding them to *Church-men*, it ſhews, they allowed them to *Lay-men*. By forbidding them in *Churches*, it ſhews, they allowed them in *Convenient places*. By forbidding them on *Sundaies*, it ſhews, they allowed them on *Working-daies*: and ſo he hath made a fair hand with himſelf: *Charged Canons*, to be all *Diſcharged*, and ſhot in his own face But is this a wiſe, or a wiſe man's Argument? *Plays* were forbidden

bidden by *Councils* heretofore; therefore they ought to be forbidden by the *Church* now? For how many things have been decreed by *Councils*, which now are clean left off, and abrogated? Did not the *Council* of *Antisiodore* decree it unlawfull to give *New-years Gifts* at *Christmas*? Yet who sees it not now an *Annual custome*; and without offence? Did not the same *Council* decree it unlawfull to deck houses with *Lawrel*, or *green Boughs*? Yet who sees it not now an usual fashion, and counted a *Decency*? Did not the *Synod* in *Trullo* decree it unlawfull for *Gossips* at a *Christening* to marry together ever after? Yet what Marriages now more lawfull, more frequent? Did not the same *Council* in *Trullo* decree all eating of Blood to be unlawfull, and subject to *Excommunication*? Yet who eats it not now familiarly, and without scandal? Infinite the like. For indeed the Constitutions of the *Church* have ever had regard to the time: and the time to the circumstances of occasion; which not being

known

known, no man can Judg of the great fitneſs of Decrees, as they might be then; and yet of the great unfitneſs of the ſame Decrees, if they ſhould be now. And therefore, though this man ſeem to produce *Councels*, yet, in truth, he produceth them not, he delivers the words as a *Parrat*, that pronounceth the Syllables, but not as a man, that underſtands the meaning; and not to deliver them in their full ſenſe, is in true ſenſe, not to deliver them at all; as *Cicero* ſaith, *Then ſhall a man be ſaid to ſay the ſame thing, when he ſaith it in the ſame ſenſe, and with the ſame intent.* But how can this man do this, when he knows not the intent, nor the circumſtances of it? or, if he do, yet he diſſembles it, and will not know it, which is a worſe ignorance, then the other. And if we ſhould allow him the levelling of his Canons, as he pretends, though we are not willing to lay any taint upon ſuch reverend *Aſſemblies*, yet this we may be bold to ſay, that oftentimes *Major pars meliorem vicit*; and that ſometimes one *Paphuntius* hath

hath been more worth, then all the *Council* beſides.

And (*Fol.* 668.) as for his *Squadron* of ſeventy one *Fathers*, and his one hundred and fifty other *Writers*, whom he brags to have gotten on his ſide, though it make a great ſhew, yet it is no great matter, if we conſider he hath been fifteen hundred years in getting them; and eſpecially, if we conſider, that all thoſe, whom he cannot get on his ſide, we may juſtly challenge to be on our ſide, and will make a greater troop, then his can make an army. But, leſt it ſhould be thought that all theſe *Trumpets*, which he pretends to be for him, be ſo for him, that they be againſt us, let us a little hearken to their ſounding, whether it hath been always upon a true *Alarm*, or no; for if it have not, we may juſtly except againſt them, and bar their voices from our *Scrutiny*.

Some therefore of his *Trumpets*, and thoſe of the beſt, and ancienteſt, are ſuch as ſound onely at *Pagan Plays*, whereas our *Plays* are no more like them.

hem, then *Helene* the Mother of *Con-*
antine was like *Helene* the Wife of
Menelaus; and are as different from
hem, as we our ſelves are differing from
agans: and of this, both *Tertullian*, and
t. *Cyprian*, (the two moſt earneſt of all
he *Fathers* againſt *Plays*) may be wit-
neſſes; and indeed witneſſes *inſtar omni-*
m: and whereupon do they ground
heir condemnation of *Plays*? Do they
ot both onely upon *Idolatry*? Hear
Tertullian firſt, *If there be no Idol in the*
Play, that Idolatrie be not committed in it,
hen I charge it not with any renouncing,
which we have made in Baptiſm. Next
hear St. *Cyprian*, *Quod ſpectaculum ſine Ido-*
lo? Quis ludus ſine ſacrificio? If there-
fore this man can finde in our *Plays*, ei-
ther *Idols*, or *Sacrifice*, he may juſtly re-
quire our voices in crying down of
Plays; but, if they be as clean from
leproſies, as *Naaman* was from his, ha-
ving waſhed in *Jordan*, then hath this
man need to be down on his knees, and
to ask theſe *Fathers*, and us forgiveneſs,
them for miſs-reporting, and miſs-en-
forcing

forcing them; us, for miſs-enforming and miſs-perſwading su. Becauſe *Miria* was excluded from the Camp, when ſhe was leprous; ſhall we therefore not admit her into the Camp, when ſhe is cleanſed? Indeed, when this man before brought poor, and ſimple reaſons to prove his Cauſe, we could not much blame him, (for you can have no more of a man then his *Talent*) but now, that he wreſts *Scriptures*, traduceth *Councils*, falſifieth *Fathers*, miſs-interprets *all*; this moſt needs have ſome thing voluntary in it, and hath therefore no *Mean* in the evil, becauſe a *meaning* to be evil. The onely excuſe is to ſay; that he ſeems onely *ſapere ex Indice*, to have all his learning from the *Tables* of Books: for they be theſe indeed, that make ſo many *Mountebanks* of *Scholars*, as ſwarm in the world. For, when a *Theme* is propounded, they run preſenty to the *Tables*, and pick *Authours* pockets of what ſerves their turns, but never once offer to look the *Authours* in the face; and ſo, not knowing the *Antecedents*, and

Subſequents,

Subſequents, they neither underſtand what they read, nor this man, what he writes.

And that you may know him to be ſuch an one, you ſhall find it by this one caſt of his Scholar-ſhip, (*Fol.* 546.) where he ſaith, *That* Cyprian *was ſeconded by* Tertullian, *in his Opinion againſt Plays*: as though *Tertullian* had lived after *Cyprian*: for that a man, who goes before, and begins an *Opinion*, may be ſeconded by him that follows, there is reaſon; but to ſay, that a man, which follows, and continues an *Opinion*, is ſeconded by him that went before, and began it, was never heard of, till he hath brought it into *Being*. And may we not here ſay, that this one *Anſwer* alone, is it ſelf a full diſcharge to his whole *Book*, without any more ado; ſeeing all the *Arguments* he brings in his *Book*, either drawn from *Reaſon*, or from *Authorities*, either of *Councels*, or *Fathers*, or other *Writers*; they are true enough againſt the *Plays* of the *Heathen*; but, as *Plays* are now in uſe amongſt *Chriſtians*, not a true

true word in any of them; and therefore where he hath entituled his *Book*, A *Tragedie* of *Actours*; he ſhould, if he had done right, have entituled it, A *Comedie* of *Errours*. It is true indeed, *Tertullian* condemneth *Plays* by places of *Scripture*, not onely againſt *Idolatry*, and *Superſtition*, but againſt *Senſuality* alſo, and *Concupiſcence*: but doth he not by the ſame places condemn alſo *ſecond Marriages*; when either a man marrieth a ſecond wife, or a woman a ſecond husband? yet he is condemned for applying the places againſt theſe; and why not then as well, for applying them againſt *Plays*? for who doubts, but there is more *Concupiſcence*, and *Senſuality* in marrying a ſecond wife, or husband, then in ſeeing a *Play*?

There is yet another Senſe, in which theſe holy *Fathers* do ſometimes ſpeak of *Plays*, though neither *Idolatrous*, nor *Superſtitious*, as things unworthy of a *Chriſtian* man: but is it not in the ſenſe, that *Chriſt* ſpake of the providence for earthly things, of caring for food, and

raymen;

yment; *after all which*, ſaith he, *the entiles ſeek?* And doth not Saint *Paul* the ſame ſenſe, though in another egree, vilifie alſo the beſt works, that e can do, even the good works f the Law; accounting them to be o better then very *Dung*: then which e could not have uſed a more con-mptible, and diſgracefull Term. But ho knows not, that theſe things are poken by way of compariſon? If there-ore that, which is *comparatively* ſpoken, man ſhall take as ſpoken *poſitively*, ſhall e not ſhew himſelf a *ſuperlative* falſe *Expoſitour*? For, ſetting aſide *Idolatry*, nd *open Obſcenity*, which our *Plays* de-eſt as much as this man, neither *Ter-ullian*, nor any of the *Fathers*, did ever any otherwiſe condemn *Plays*, but as hey condemned all *artificial* delights of the world, aſpiring onely to that per-fection, of which St. *John* ſpeaks; *Love not the world, neither the things of the world: if any man love the world, the love of God is not in him.* I ſpeak this the rather for *prevention*; leſt the man, vouchſafing

perhaps to read this *Diſcourſe*, ſhould think he had found here a juſt ground for a *Reply*, and vex us again with *tranſcribing of Authours*, and heaping up *Mountains of Authorities*, like *Pelion* upon *Oſſa*, to this purpoſe: which now, he may hereby know, will ſerve him to no purpoſe; for we ſeek to juſtifie *Plays*, as fit recreations for an honeſt *Natural*, or *Moral* man, but no ways to be matched with the high *myſterious Contemplations* of a *Chriſtian* in *Divinity*. And, I doubt not, but all the *Sentences* of the *Fathers*, ſpoken againſt *Plays* in this kinde, will take this for an *Anſwer*; and this may be ſufficient to ſhew, that theſe mens ſounding is inſufficient, *& nihil ad Rhombum.*

Others there are, of whom we may be bold to ſay, ſeeing the *Proverb* ſaith it, that *The greateſt Clerks are not always the wiſeſt men.* Bring them to a *Matter*, that is not meerly *Logical*, and you ſhall finde them oftentimes to be meerly *Irrational*. *Plays* therefore being *Practical*, and their chief uſe conſiſting in *Action*;

theſe mens ſoundings will prove no other, then as the barking of *Dogs* at *Moonſhine* in the Water.

Others there are, that ſound out of *zeal*, but their *zeal* being without *knowledge*, though we may commend their *zeal*, yet we cannot commend their *ignorance*; and we may truly apply another *Proverb* to theſe, that *With too much haſte they outrun the Conſtable*: for though they had the *Alarm* in their ears, yet they have loſt it by the way; and have ſo faſt fixed their eyes upon the abuſe of *Plays*, that they never caſt a look upon the right uſe, but are like one *Gobryas*, whom *Plutarch* ſpeaks of, who fallen down, and ſtrugling with *Magus*, bid *Darius* thruſt his ſword though through them both. But theſe are no fit men to make *Judges* of, who ought rather to ſpare the *guilty*, then to condemn the *innocent*; and rather to venture a doubtfull *danger*, then to deſtroy a manifeſt *benefit*: for the hurt of *Plays*, though ſeen, may be avoided; the benefit of *Plays*, if not ſeen, cannot be obtained. And thus, by

that time theſe mens ſoundings are all ſuppreſt, there will be as few left to ſound their *Trumpets* againſt *Plays*, as were left to caſt *ſtones* at the *Adultereſs* in the *Goſpel*.

And laſtly, when the *Fathers*, and other devout *Writers*, inveigh ſo bitterly againſt *Plays*, and apply to them ſuch heavie ſtyles, may they not be underſtood to do it παρηγορικῶς, by way of *Exaggeration*, *in majorem cautelam*: that there be not ſo much as the *appearance of evil* amongſt *Chriſtians*, as St. *Paul* acknowledgeth? And when *Players* uſe *Speeches* ſometimes, and *Actions*, a little ſwerving from the ſtrict Rules of *Puritie*, may they not be underſtood to do it ἐξηγητικῶς, by way of *Illuſtration*, *in majorem ſuadelam*; as a *Player* in *Terence* profeſſeth his intent to be, *Ut, cùm cognôrint, perpetuò oderint?* Although therefore there may ſeem to be between them a *Diametrical oppoſition*; yet, ſeeing they agree in the *Principal* intent, that is, in *Moral* erudition, why may they not be brought to ſome indifferent *reconcile-*

ment,

ment, and not continue in the deadly *fewd*, which this man *profeſſeth*: if a Spirit of *Charity*, which covereth faults, and not a Spirit of *Malice*, which maketh faults where none is, were the *Umpire* between them, and had the hearing, and handling of the matter?

After his *Canons* of *fifty four Councils*, and his *ſeventy one* pieces of *Ordinance* of the *Fathers*, and his *hundred and fifty Muſket-ſhot* of other *Writers*, he comes at laſt (*Fol.* 702.) with his *Squibs* of *fourty Heathen Writers*, and *Philoſophers*; but hath he not utterly diſgraced his whole *Army*, by having ſuch *Scare-crows* to march in the Rear? Hath he not extremely overſhot himſelf, to bring his Cauſe before *Heathenish* Moral *Writers*? Whileſt he kept himſelf in *Foro Divino*, and *Foro Eccleſiaſtico*, though he had not much to ſay againſt *Plays*, yet *Plays* had not much to ſay for themſelves; (for we muſt not look, that the *Scriptures* will perſwade us to go to *Plays*, no more then they perſwade us to ſeek to be rich) if he had kept himſelf within his

compaſs, and gone no further then his Name profeſſeth, to be onely *Hiſtrio-maſtix*, which is, in his own interpretation, *a Beadle of Beggars*, he might with ſome indifferency have been tolerated; but, having once gotten the *Whip* into his hand, he lays about him like a *Bedlam-man*, and ſtrikes at every man he meets, not onely his profeſſed *Duelliſts*, the *Players*, that act the *Plays*, but the *Poets*, that make them, the *Spectatours*, that ſee them, the *Magiſtrates*, that allow them, the *Muſick*, that abets them, the *Dancing*, that graces them; nay, he ſpares not Sovereign *Majeſty*, even *Kings*, and *Princes*: that we muſt needs now take his *Whip* from him, and if he ſhew not himſelf more reaſonable with his *Tongue*, then he hath done with his *Pen*, even ſend him to *Bedlam* for a *mad man*. But for *Muſick*, and *Dancing*, we will talk with him hereafter: now we will onely queſtion him about the other, and begin with *Poets*, becauſe they are the *Beginners* of *Plays*. And what can he ſay, why he ſhould offer to whip them?

them? Were they not highly esteemed, when they lived? Are they not highly valued, now they are dead? Is there any Library, where their *Books* are wanting? Is there any Learned man, that cites not their Sentences? Nay; so much did *Plato* esteem of *Sophron*'s Books, who was, as *Quintilian* saith, but *Mimorum scriptor*, as it were *a writer of Ballads*, that he was found to have them under his Pillow when he died. If then he cannot for very shame condemn *Poets*, how can he with any face condemn *Players*? As if he should allow a *Song* to be set in *Musick*, and not allow it to be sung? or an *Oration* to be *penned*, and not to be *pronounced*? But which are the *Players* he would whip? If onely the bad *Actours*, we are contented; let him not spare them: for to be a bad *Actour* is no more the part of a *Player*, then his *Book* is the *Work* of a *Scholar*. But will he therefore whip *Roscius* too? He were best take heed what he does: for, if *Roscius* bring him once upon the *Stage*, he will make him more ridiculous by

playing the *Beadle*, then once he made *Chærea*, (whom *Cicero* ſpeaks of) by playing the *Bawd*. *Brutus*, that glorious *Tyrannicide*, was not only a great favourer, and furtherer of *Plays*, but he writ to *Cicero*, that he ſhould not intermit to ſee them, even preſently after *Cæſar*'s death; and will he whip *Cicero* too, if he take him at a *Play*? He were beſt take heed what he doeth; for *Cicero* can write *Orationes Prinnianas*, as well as *Philippicas*, that will live to his *diſgrace*, as long as Letters ſhall live in *grace*. *Pompey* the Great built a *Theatre* on purpoſe for ſeeing of *Plays*; and will he whip *Brutus*, and *Pompey* too, for diſſolute *Magiſtrates* in allowing of *Plays*? He were beſt take heed what he doeth; for *Brutus* hath a *penknife* died in blood, and *Pompey* can lead him as a *Slave* in his *Triumphs*: and it is not for a ſimple *Gown-man* to meddle with them, who were the Princes of the *Gens Togata*. *Auguſtus Cæſar* thought ſo modeſtly of *Plays*, that he allowed *Veſtal Virgins* to go unto them, aſſigning them a place

in

in the *Theatre*, where they ſhould ſit, and ſee them; and will he whip *Veſtal Virgins* too, if he catch them at a *Play*? He were beſt take heed what he doeth; for they ſit there by the *Emperour*'s allowance; and *Non eſt tutam in eum ſcribere, qui poteſt proſcribere, It is not ſafe writing againſt him, who hath power to baniſh you.* If *Plays* then have *Roſcius* for an *Actour*, *Cicero* for a *Spectatour*, *Brutus* for an *Abettour*, *Pompey* for a *Benefactour*, and *Auguſtus* for a *Patron*, where is he, that ſcandals *Plays*, as if they durſt not ſhew their faces in any good *Company*? Let him bring me five ſuch men in *Foro Morali*, in diſgrace of *Plays*, as I have brought him five here in their commendation, and I will confeſs the *Game* loſt; if he cannot, let him then leave his facing, and his bragging, which do but ſet him aloft, to make him a *Spectacle*; and though with the *Credulous* they get him *Credit*, yet with the *Judicious* they ſhew he hath no *Judgment*.

But where are (*Fol.* 702.) his fourty *Heatheniſh Moral Writers*, and *Philoſophers*,

phers all this while? *Socrates*, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Cicero*, *Seneca*, *Tacitus*, *Pliny*, *Macrobius*, *Marcus Aurelius*, and the reſt? Indeed he hath made them his *Executours*, but they refuſe to *adminiſter*; and we may ſay of them, as *Auguſtus* ſaid of his *Ajax*, (a *Tragedie* he had written) *In ſpongiam incubuit*, they are ſhrunk in the wetting. And he makes me think of a Mad man of *Athens*, who, in all other points a ſenſible man, onely in this one point *diſtracted*, that, ſtanding by the *Sea-ſide*, what *Ships* ſoever he ſaw paſs by, he preſently thought them to be his own, and would exceedingly rejoyce, as if they were his *Ships*, newly come home with *rich prizes*: ſo this man, in other matters, for any thing I know, well enough in his wits, ſeems yet to have one corner of his Brains poſſeſſed with this madneſs; that ſtanding in his *Library* amongſt his *Books*, what good *Authours* ſoever he ſees there, he preſently thinks them to be of his *Opinion*, againſt *Plays*, when, Good man! there is no more to be found of his *Opinion* in any of their

Books,

Books, then was found of this mad *Athe-*
nian's, goods in any of the *Ships*. It were
tedious to examine them all; if I ſhew
you his *faults* in ſome, you may believe
me in the reſt: but what need I require
you to believe me, when you may turn
to the places, and take him tripping
your ſelves. For in the places he cites
either ye ſhall finde nothing at all of that
he ſpeaks, or nothing at all to the pur-
poſe he ſpeaks of. Try him in *Seneca*,
becauſe he is likelieſt to be next at hand.
He cites his one-hundred and twenty ſe-
cond, and one hundred and twenty third
Epiſtles: but in theſe two long *Epiſtles*
there is not a word to be found con-
cerning *Plays*. He cites his ſeventh
Epiſtle, and there indeed he ſpeaks of
Spectacula; but what? not *Plays*, but
Earneſt; of which he ſaith, *Manè, Leo-*
nibus, & Urſis homines; meridie, ſpectato-
ribus ſuis objiciuntur. He cites his *Proeme*
to his *Controverſies*: there he hath a Line,
or two, of the *Effeminateneſs* of young
men in his *Time*; but concerning *Plays*
Nè verbum quidem. He cites his twelfth
Chapter,

Chapter De brevitate Vitæ, a place ra-
ther againſt himſelf; for *Seneca*, having
there ſpoken of the *Luxury* of his Time,
concludeth thus; *I nunc, & Mimos multa*
mentiri ad exprobrandam luxuriam puta:
plura mehercule prætereunt, quàm fingunt.
He cites the one and thirtieth, and
two and thirtieth *Chapters* of the ſeventh
Book of his *Natural Queſtions*, wherein
is not a word, that makes againſt *Plays*,
onely he complains, that *Plays* were
then in more requeſt, then the ſtudy of
Philoſophy. He cites the twelfth, thir-
teenth, and fourteenth *Chapters De vita*
beata, but in all them, of *Plays*, *Altum*
ſilentium. And is not this man now the
very *mad man* of *Athens*? I might ſay
here, *Et crimine ab uno diſce omnes*. But
try another; take *Macrobius*. He cites
his firſt, and ſeventh *Chapters* of his *Sa-*
turnalia: but in the firſt not a word of
Plays; in the other he ſhews how won-
derfully *Auguſtus Cæſar* graced certain
Players of his *Time*, *Laberius*, and *Publius*,
Pylades, and *Hylas*, as if he ſhould *Quote*
us a place on purpoſe, to give himſelf the

Lie.

ie. He cites *Valerius Maximus*, who tells ndeed of *Sempronius Sophus*, that he put way his Wife for going to *Plays* with- ut his privitie: but this was not for oing to *Plays*, but for going without is privitie, and is thus far rather for the eputation of *Plays*, that it was not un- ommendable for women to go to *Plays*, ſo they went with their husbands, or in other good company, with their rivitie. And is not this man ſtill the mad man of *Athens*? He cites the two nd twentieth *Epiſtle* of the fourth *Book* of *Plinie*, but there a Judgment only s paſſed againſt an *Agon Gymnicus*, an Exerciſe of naked *Wreſtlers*, and what s this to *Plays*? He cites *Socrates*, and hinks he hath wiſdome on his ſide, be- cauſe he was judged the wiſeſt man by he *Delphian Oracle*: but was *Socrates* a fit man to condemn *Plays* for Obſceni- ty; who (as *Salvianus* relates) would have no Man to have any Wife of his own, but all Women to be in common: and what were this, but to betray the City, whilſt he defends the Suburbs!

For

For, where this *Opinion* is held lawfull, what *obſcenity* can be held unlawfull? He muſt therefore either renounce *Salvianus* his *Teſtimony*; and ſo he ſhall loſe the bleſſing of one of his *Fathers*, or elſe renounce *Socrates* his *Judgment*, and ſo he ſhall loſe the *Ring-leader* of one of his *Squadrons*. He cites *Plato*, but he is taken from him by one, that will hold him in ſpight of his great words, the thrice-Worthy *Sidney*, who proves plainly, that *Plato* baniſh'd not *Players* out of his *Common-wealth* for any of the reaſons by this man alledged; but becauſe the *Poets* of his *Time* filled the world with a wrong *Opinion* of the *Gods*, and he would not have the Youth depraved with ſuch *Opinions*, whereof now, without further Law, *Chriſtianity* hath taken away all the hurtfull belief. And ſo he can have no help from any of theſe, but he muſt be the *mad man* of *Athens* ſtill. And as for *Cicero*, and the learned *Emperour*, *Marcus Aurelius*, you ſhall hear them preſently ſpeak ſo much to his face; that, if none elſe would prove him

to be the *mad man* of *Athens*, yet they themſelves will be the men ſhall do it.

But theſe are but ſingle, and private men, (*Fol.* 713.) *He can ſhew whole Cities, and Nations, that baniſhed Players.* And did they not *Phyſicians* alſo, and *Philoſophers*, and *Mathematicians?* Yet in many *Cities* they were kindly entertained; they were *Civitate donati*, enfranchiſed, and made *Free Citizens*: and ſome of them grew to that wealth, that is incredible; as it is recorded of one *Æſop*, an *Actour* of *Tragedies*, that he left his Son ſo rich, that he fed upon *Pearl*, and was ſerved at his Table in *Silver Diſhes*. But mark how this man can play the *ambidexter*. At firſt, it was a good *Argument* againſt *Plays*, becauſe they were the Cuſtoms, and delights of *Heathen* People: now it muſt ſerve for an *Argument* againſt them, becauſe they were rejected, and baniſhed by *Heathen* People, that we need not wonder, how his *Book* comes to be ſo vaſt, and voluminous, ſeeing with the ſame breath he can both kindle, and blow out the fire; the

ſame

ſame thing, both affirmed, and denied, he can equally make to ſerve his turn.

And where he tells us of great Princes, and mighty Emperours, both *Heathen*, and *Chriſtian*, that are on his ſide; what ſhould we ſpeak of any *Heathen* Emperours after him, who had none before him, the great *Auguſtus*, as worthy to ſhut up the leaves of this contentious Diſcourſe, as he was to ſhut up the doors of the *Temple of Peace*. And him we have already ſhewed, by places of the man's own directing, to be directly againſt him: but, to leave no place of doubt, how firmly *Auguſtus* is on our ſide, hear what *Suetonius Tranquillus* ſaith of him, *Spectaculorum & aſſiduitate, & varietate, & magnificentiâ omnes anteceſſit; In the daily frequenting, and in the variety, and magnificence of ſetting forth Plays, he exceeded all men.* Indeed the man (*Fol.* 459.) labours much to get *Auguſtus* from us, and we cannot blame him: yet in this we blame him, that he ſeeks to get him from us by a trick; he would make us believe, that *Auguſtus* did

did not favour *Plays*, or *Players*, becauſe he puniſhed two excellent *Players*, *Hylas*, and *Pilades*, the one with *Whipping*, the other with *Baniſhment*. As though any man thought *Auguſtus* ſo far to favour *Plays*, as to grant *Players* an Immunity of committing faults without controllment? For he puniſhed them not meerly for *Playing*, but for playing the Knaves, and for their Misdemeanours. And now, that I may *Coronidem imponere*, *conclude all* with one, that wore a *Chriſtian Crown*, and wore it ſo worthily, that he was called *Pater Patriæ*; did not *Lewis the Twelfth*, King of *France*, command *Plays* to be uſed, and to be uſed after the old maner, with liberty to tax mens Vices, and not to ſpare even ſcoffing at himſelf, if he deſerved it? And how can we forget a *Queen* of our own, (of late famous Memory) whoſe *Virtues* we ſhall remember longer, then our own *Names*: who would never have given allowance to *Plays*, all the time of her Reign, and been her ſelf oftentimes a Spectatrix of them; if ſhe

had either been informed by her Confeſſours, or had conceived in her own excellent Judgment, that they could be any either Scandal to *Religion*, or Diſparagement to *Modeſtie*. And it may be a Preſident of no ſmall moment for the countenancing of *Plays*, that a great *Prelate* of our time, Eminent as well for his Piety, as his Learning, yet ſeldome paſſed a *Chriſtmaſs*, that he had not *Plays* Acted at his houſe before him.

But what cares this man for either *Princes*, or *Prelates*? for what (*Fol.* 734.) ſaith he: *Too many great ones (he knows not out of what reſpects) have vouchſafed to honour* Plays, *(or rather diſhonour themſelves) with their preſence:* and (*Fol.* 735.) *were degenerating Princes*: this is, that he ſtands (*Fol.* 719.) upon, *and will maintain, that not one, either* Heathen, *or* Chriſtian *writer of any Note*, *can be alledged in defence of* Plays. A bold challenge, but, if there be no fallacie in his *Writers* of *Note*, a challenge, that is preſently like to fall to the ground.

For

For what thinks he of *Marcus Tullius Cicero?* was not he a *Writer* of *Note?* Who, though he have not written a Book on purpoſe, yet hath inſerted in his Books many notable Sentences in behalf of *Plays;* which if we ſhould collect, would make a juſt Volum. But what need we, when he hath one ſentence, that ſeems as a Verdict on their ſide, where he ſaith, *Comœdia eſt Imitatio vitæ; Speculum conſuetudinis, & Imago Veritatis*: (a ſhort, but a full Deſcription of the Nature of *Plays:*) *a Comedy is the reſemblance of Life, the mirrour of Cuſtome, the image of Truth:* in which not a word, that ſpeaks not, if not in their Praiſe, at leaſt in their Commendation. And not to ſtand piling up of Authours; what thinks he of one, that may be *Inſtar multorum*, the *Emperour*, and *Philoſopher*, *Marcus Aurelius?* Was not he a *Writer* of *Note?* Who in his excellent Book of *Morality* (for which we are beholding to our engraffed Country-man, a learned Iſſue of a moſt Learned Parent) hath ſo briefly, and

yet ſo fully expreſſed the profit of *Plays*, that you muſt not think it tedious, if I ſet down his own words. *Tragedies* (ſaith he) *were at firſt brought in, and Inſtituted, to put men in minde of worldly Chances, and Caſualties, that theſe things in the ordinary courſe of Nature did ſo happen, that men, that were much pleaſed, and delighted by ſuch accidents upon this Stage, would not by the ſame things, in a greater Stage, be grieved, and afflicted. After the Tragedie, the* Comœdia Vetus, *or antient Comedie was brought in; which had the liberty to inveigh againſt* Perſonal Vices; *being therefore, through this their Freedom, and liberty of ſpeech, of very good uſe, and effect, to reſtrain men from pride, and arrogancie. After theſe, what were either the* Media, *or* Nova Comædia *admitted for, but meerly, or for the moſt part, for the delight, and pleaſure of curious, and excellent Imitation?* Thus writes *Marcus Aurelius*: and what could he have ſpoken in ſo few words to a greater praiſe of *Plays?* And this he writes in his Book, I may ſay, of *Mortified Moralitie*; that one may be

ſure,

ſure, he ſpeaks as he thinks: and cannot be ſuſpected to flatter Senſuality. And what will the man ſay now to *Heathen* Writers? What? but that, which we may ſay for him; that ſure their Books had no *Tables*, and ſo he could not come to ſee what they ſaid of *Plays*. Or perhaps for all his ſaying, he cares not much whether *Heathen* Writers be of his ſide, or no: but for *Chriſtian* Writers, he is ſure enough of them, to make his challenge good. But is not this Impudence paſt all patience, when (*Fol.* 763.) he hath named himſelf two *Writers* of *Note*, *Molanus*, and *Lindanus*; the one a *Divinity Profeſſour*, the other a reverend *Biſhop*, who have both of them written in Juſtification of *Plays*? But you muſt allow him to except theſe, he meant ſo when he made his challenge. Well, be it ſo: what thinks he then of the *Glory* of our *Nation*, the Incomparable Sir *Philip Sidney*? Was not he a *Chriſtian*, and a *Writer* of *Note*? Who in his general *Defence of Poetry* hath inſerted alſo a particular defence of *Plays*,

and you may well hear his words without altering, becauſe they are not capable of bettering. *Comedie* (ſaith he) *is an Imitation of the common Errours of our life, which the Comedian repreſenteth in the moſt ridiculous, and ſcornfull ſort, that may be, ſo as it is impoſſible, that any Beholder can be content to be ſuch an one. Now, as, in Geometrie, the Oblique muſt be known as well as the Right; and, in Arithmetick, the Odd as well as the Even: ſo, in the Actions of our Life, who ſeeth not the filthyneſs of Evil wanteth a great foil to perceive the beauty of Virtue. This doth the Comedie handle ſo, in our private, and domeſtical matters, that with hearing it we get as it were an Experience: what is to be looked for of a niggardly* Demea, *of a crafty* Davus, *of a flattering* Gnatho, *of a Vain-glorious* Thraſo, *and not onely to know what effects are to be expected, but to know, who be ſuch, by the ſignifying badg given them by the Comedian. And little reaſon hath any man to ſay, that men learn the Evil, by ſeeing it ſo ſet out; ſince (as I ſaid before) there is no man living, but by*

the force truth hath in Nature no ſooner ſeeth theſe men play their parts, but he wiſheth them in Piſtrinum. *Although perchance, the ſack of his own faults lie ſo behinde his back, that he ſeeth not himſelf to dance the ſame meaſure: whereto nothing can more open his Eies, then to ſee his own Actions contemptibly ſet forth. So that, the right uſe of* Comedie *will, I think, by no body be blamed: and much leſs of the high, and excellent* Tragedie, *that openeth the greateſt Wounds, and ſheweth forth the Ulcers, that are covered with Tiſſue; that maketh* Kings *fear to be* Tyrants, *and* Tyrants *to manifeſt their* Tyrannical *humours; that, with ſtirring the Effects of Admiration, and Commiſeration, teacheth the uncertainty of this world, and upon how weak Foundations Gilden roofs are builded. It were therefore too abſurd to caſt out ſo excellent a repreſentation of whatſoever is worthy to be learned.* Thus the excellent *Sidney:* and what more could he have ſaid, if he would have ſought to flatter *Plays?* Yet there is an Exception againſt him to, becauſe (*Fol.* 913.) he

hath written an *Arcadia*, one of the Books in this man's *Index Expurgatorius*. But perhaps he will admit of no *Engliſh* Teſtimonies: take one then in *France*, and what thinks he of the Ingenious, and Learned *Michael de Montaigne*; was not he a *Chriſtian*, and a *Writer* of *Note*? And hear what he writes in the five and twentieth Chapter of his Firſt book of *Eſſaies*: *I have ever* (ſaith he) *accuſed them of Impertinencie, that condemn, and diſallow ſuch kinde of Recreation, and blamed thoſe of In-juſtice, that refuſe good, and honeſt Comedians, or* (as we call them) *Players, to enter our good Towns, and grudg the common people ſuch publique ſports. Politick, and well-ordered Common Wealths endeavour rather carefully to unite, and aſſemble their Citizens together, as in ſerious Offices of Devotion; ſo in honeſt Exerciſes of Recreation. Common ſociety, and loving Friend-ſhip is thereby cheriſhed, and encreaſed: and beſides, they cannot have more Formal, and Regular Paſtimes allowed them, then ſuch, as are Acted, and Repreſented in open view of all, and in the preſence of the Magiſtrate*

Magiſtrates themſelves. And, if I might bear ſway, I would think it reaſonable, that in populous Cities there ſhould be Theatres appointed for ſuch Spectacles. Thus *Montaigne*: and where is the man's challenge now, as though there were none, that either did, or durſt oppoſe him? Certainly we may truly ſay; the Saying is verified of him, *Scientia non habet Inimicum præter Ignorantem: Verecundia non habet Inimicum præter Impudentem.*

But when all is ſaid, that can be: this is his *Murus Aheneus*, that he ſaith no more, then what *Tertullian*, and Saint *Cyprian*, and many other moſt Zealous, and Learned men, have ſaid before. It is true indeed, *Tertullian*, and Saint *Cyprian*, two ſhining Lights in the *Church* of God, have both of them written Treatiſes *De ſpectaculis*, concerning *Shews*, and *Plays*; and I could wiſh they were in *Engliſh*, that the world might ſee a ſtrange thing to wonder at: which is, that this man ſaith almoſt nothing material of *Plays*, which he hath not from them, and yet, where they write moſt learnedly,

learnedly, he ſaith the ſame thing, and yet writes moſt ignorantly: where they write exceeding devoutly, he ſaith the ſame thing, and yet writes exceeding malitiouſly: where they ſhew in their writing *great judgment, and diſcretion*; he ſaith the ſame thing, and yet ſhews nothing but *Vanity*, and groſs ſimplicity.

One would wonder how this ſhould happen, but this is the matter: Circumſtances in matters *Moral* enter common often times with the ſubſtance it ſelf, or rather indeed become very parts of the ſubſtance; which theſe Fathers have moſt duly obſerved: but this man goes away with the ſubſtance, as *Sampſon* with the Gates of *Azzah*, and leaves the Circumſtances all behinde him: and ſo, whilſt he thinks he hath the ſubſtance of the matter; he hath not indeed the matter of the Subſtance. A few words will make it plain. *Tertullian* lived in the time of *Septimius Severus Emperour* of *Rome*: under whom was the *Fifth*, or *Sixth* Perſecution againſt

Chriſtians

Christians: in the twelfth year of his Empire were proclaimed *Secular Plays* (so called, because they were solemnized but *semel in sæculo*, once in an hundred years) and were dedicated to the honour of some of their *Heathen* Gods. *Tertullian* (conceiving it might breed great scandal to the *Christian* Religion, if *Christians* should resort unto them: and the *Heathen* being apt to insult, as though *Christians* had no pleasures in their own *Religion*, but were fain to come for pleasures to them) writes a Treatise, exhorting all *Christians* to forbear these *Plays*; and useth indeed many *Excellent*, and weighty *Reasons*, that these *Plays* were full of *Idolatrie*, and Superstition, and therefore they could not go to see them, but they must become as Accessaries, and partakers with them in their *Idolatrie*: that they were full of licentious Beastlinesse, as wherein men, and women were brought in, naked upon the Stage, using many Libidinous, and Immodest gestures; that themselves were now in Persecuti-

on

on, fitter to *mourn*, then to be *merry*, fitter to wring their hands with compunction, then to clap their hands at a *Plaudite*; that they might bethink themſelves of greater pleaſures in their own Religion, *their Reconcilement with God, their Redemption by Chriſt, their Hope of Heaven*, and ſuch like. Now, what man of our *Miniſters*, if he had been in *Tertullian*'s place would not have written of theſe *Plays*, as *Tertullian* did: yet what man of our Miniſters, as our *Plays* are now, would once have offered to open his mouth againſt them? They were *Idolatrous*; ours, meerly *Moral*: they, dedicated to *Heathen Gods*; ours, dedicated only to honeſt *Recreation*: they, full of impious, and prophane Obſcenity; ours, full only of civil Mirth: they, full of cruelty, and blood; ours, friendly, and quiet, lovingly maintaining mutual ſociety: they, in time of *perſecution*; ours, in time (for which we have cauſe to praiſe God) of *Peace*, and *Jubile*: they, Acted by *Heathen*, and amongſt *Heathen*; ours, Acted by *Chriſtians*, and amongſt

amongſt *Chriſtians.* And now, let the world judg, whether there be not juſt cauſe to commend this *Father* for writing as he did, and yet to condemn this man for writing as he doth? For he duly obſerved all due Circumſtances, but this man obſerves none; but is meerly a confuſed Lump, as if he were a man made out of the firſt *Chaos*, and were never deſcended from *Adam*, made of the Earth, when it was a diſtinct *Element.*

Although therefore he could ſay, that he ſaith nothing, but what others have ſaid before, yet would this be no *Apologie* for him; ſeeing he ſaith it not in the ſame Times, nor amongſt the ſame Perſons, nor upon the ſame Occaſions, nor with regard of any due Circumſtance. And yet, this is not all; for is not his Book full of ſevere Cenſurings? of uncharitable Invectives? of far-fetch'd Applications? of opprobrious Language? of blemiſhing Imputations? But, ſuppoſe it were not, Is it nothing to gather the errours of former times,

and

and to caſt them upon the *Reformation* of the preſent time? Is it nothing to ſuck the *Ulcers* of Diſeaſed perſons, and then ſpit them all in the face of his Countrey? Is it nothing to obtrude his own miſtakings for truths; and that to the ſcandal of the whole *nation*? Is it nothing to perſwade the world, that (*Fol.* 61, & 568.) we profeſs to be *Chriſtians*, but are none, as maintaining *Heathenish*, and *Idolatrous* Cuſtomes? Is it nothing (*Fol.* 149.) to ſow ſeeds of *Suſpicion*, and *Jealouſies* in the peoples hearts, as if all were out of order, both in *Church*, and *Common-wealth*? Is it nothing for a private man, to take upon him to be *Cenſor morum*, in matters both *Civil*, and *Eccleſiaſtical*? If theſe things ſhould be ſuffered, every *Korah*, and *Dathan* would be controlling of *Moſes*, and *Aaron*; every *Jack Straw* would be giving *Laws* to his *Prince*; every *Dreamer* would be an *Enthuſiaſt*, as if another *Montanus* were come amongſt us: but I forbear to aggravate faults already cenſured,

Quas meruit pœnas, jam dedit illud opus.

Onely

Onely add this as a *Corollary* to all, that hath been ſaid, If *Plays* be neither guilty of *Idolatry*, nor *obſcenity*, then is his *Book* guilty both of *malice*, and *ſlander*; but they are neither *Idolatrous* in any ſort, as all men will acknowledge, nor *Obſcene* in the ſort he would make them, as no man can deny; and therefore what is his *Book* but a very unmannerly *ſurmiſe* for the maner, and a very filthy *Impoſtume* for the matter. And now, that you have heard this *Negative Argument* to abſolve *Plays*; you may be pleaſed to hear one *Affirmative Argument*, to make them abſolute, and it ſhall be cut after his own faſhion, if that will pleaſe him.

That exerciſe is moſt worthy to be frequented, in which both profit, and pleaſure may be had together: but ſuch are *Playes*, therefore moſt worthy to be frequented. The *Major* is proved thus,

Omne tulit punctum, qui miſcuit utile dulci.

The *Minor* thus,

Et prodeſſe volunt, & delectare Poëtæ.

There remains onely a ſhort *Paraphraſe*

phraſe upon this *Argument*, and then *Dixi.*

For ſhould we not wrong *Plays*, if we did onely *defend* them, and did not *commend* them? To leave them *non Laudatos*, were to leave them *Illaudatos*: and they deſerve not onely an *Apologie*, but an *Encomium*. As therefore it is ſaid of *Images*, that they are the *Books* of ſuch as cannot read; ſo we may ſay of *Plays*, that they are the *Scholes* of ſuch as cannot ſtudie, and teach that with eaſe and delight, which in other courſes cannot be attained without much pain, and labour. And let not the *Name* abuſe you, as if you were at *play*, when you are at a *Play*; for though the *Name* be but a *Jeſt*, yet is there in *good earneſt* much *earneſt good* to be learned from thence by due *obſervation*. Certainly, the very ſcope of *Plays* in *Chriſtian times*, hath ever been addreſſed to the magnifying of *Virtue*; or to make notorious the foulneſs, and deformity of *Vice*; wherein indeed they have an ability, then any other courſe far more enforcing. For where-

as the common man is drawn to love *Virtue*, not ſo much by the love of *Virtue*, as by the love of *Happineſs*, which grows out of *Virtue*; and to hate *Vice*, not ſo much for the hate of *Vice*, as for the hate of *Miſeries*, that flow out of *Vice*: it muſt neceſſarily follow, that what doth moſt manifeſt ſuch happineſs, or ſuch miſeries, muſt needs, to *Virtue*, or from *Vice*, be moſt enforcing; but this effect is far better wrought by *Plays*, the *Repreſentation* of life, then by the life it ſelf: ſeeing life, being caſual, and tedious, doth neither always anſwer to deſert; nor yet is eaſie to be obſerved, where the *Play* no ſooner ſhews you the *Vice*, but it inflicts the *puniſhment*; no ſooner the *Virtue*, but it beſtoweth the *reward*. Beſides, where *Laws* ſuppreſs faults, by making the faulty, puniſhable: *Plays* reclaim the faulty, by making the faults, if ſmall, *ridiculous*, if great, *odious*.

Indeed, the Paſſages of the world are excellent *Glaſſes*, if they be had within reaſonable diſtance, which, as it is the purpoſe of *Hiſtories* to do by *Re-*

lation; ſo it is the purpoſe of *Plays* to do it by *Repreſentation*, as *Cicero* ſaith, *Hæc conficta arbitror à Poetis eſſe, ut effictos mores noſtros, expreſſámque imaginem noſtræ quotidianæ vitæ videamus*: *Plays*, I conceive, were deviſed by *Poets* for this purpoſe; that in them, as in a *Glaſs*, we might ſee the maners, and very *Image* of our daily life. *Plays* indeed are *Glaſſes* of the Paſſages, and Actions of the world: and it is unhappy for *Glaſſes*, when they fall into the hands of *Ill-favoured* faces; for they may chance to lay the *Illfavouredneſs* of their faces upon the *Glaſſes*: and juſt ſo it is with this man; for he lays all the blame of the world's bad actions upon *Plays*, where he ought rather to lay all the blame of *Plays* bad actions upon the world: for, if the world were *good*, *Plays* would be *good*; but, if the world be bad, *Plays* are but the *Glaſſes*, they do but their kinde to repreſent it as it is; and therefore no fault of theirs, if they be bad too.

But he cannot abide to hear talk of *Repreſentations*, he finds no difference be-

tween

tween real *committing* a Sin, and *repreſenting* it. But have we not even in *Scripture* ſome *Examples*, (which we may apply with reverence) that things which cannot without *indecency* be done, may yet without *indecency* be *repreſented*? Can there be a more beaſtly, a more ſhamefull act, then to ſhew one's ſelf ſtark naked before all people? yet the *Prophet Eſay* did ſo; and did ſo three years together: and though in it ſelf it were a ſhamefull act, yet in him it was not ſo; becauſe he did it for *repreſentation*. Can there be a more foul, or fooliſh act, then for a man purpoſely to marry a *Whoor*, and to have children of *Fornications*? yet the *Prophet Hoſea* did ſo: and, though in it ſelf it were a moſt fooliſh act; yet in him it was not ſo, becauſe he did it for *repreſentation*. And may we not then draw from hence not only an *Apologie* for *Plays*, by reaſon of their lawfulneſs, but an *Encomium* alſo, by reaſon of their *forcibleneß*? And for this cauſe the great *Schole-man*, *Thomas Aquinas*, ſaith, and ſaith it in this

very caſe. *Poeticæ Fabulæ idcirco inventæ ſunt, ut mortales adducerent ad virtutis adeptionem, ac Vitii fugam, ad quæ ſimplices homines melius repræſentationibus, quàm rationibus inducuntur. Plays were invented to this purpoſe, that men might the better be drawn to embrace Virtue, and to flie Vice; to which they are much better drawn by repreſentations, then by reaſons.*

But he would be thought very devout; he ſtands upon it, that we have other, far better, more *Cryſtalline Glaſſes* then *Plays*, even *Scriptures*, the *Word of God*, and *Preachers*, the *Miniſters* of the *Word of God*, &c. As though, becauſe the *Sun* is a glorious Light of God's making, we might not uſe a *Torch* of our own making, when the *Sun* is down? The *Scriptures* indeed are *Divine Rules*, God's Word is *a Lanthorn to our feet, and a Light to our paths*, and *Preachers* are ſublime *Schole-maſters*, who ſit in *Moſes Chair* to inſtruct us; and I could wiſh with this man, that *Prayers*, & *Sermons* were more frequented, and *Plays* leſs; but yet not with this man's minde, as though every one,

one, that goes to a *Play*, were damned: but becauſe *Plays* are but of *Humane invention*, and may miſcarry in that they intend; *Sermons* are of *Divine inſtitution*, and have a *promiſe* of *Grace* annexed; and of which it is ſaid, That *Faith cõmes by hearing*. We ſee *Plays* but to refreſh our *Spirits*; but we hear *Sermons* to ſanctifie our *Spirits*: we ſee *Plays* but as a *bodily recreation*; but we hear *Sermons* as a *ſpiritual edification*; which yet I ſpeak not to make *compariſon*, but to ſhew there is no *compariſon* to be made. They are *non eodem nominanda die*. But yet they are no *Claſſes*; he can never make a *Glaſs* of a *Pulpit*, as we may do of a *Stage*; that may teach us to know our ſelves, but it cannot ſhew us to ſee our ſelves: this is onely done by *repreſentation*, which is the proper Office, and work of *Plays*. If therefore we could make true uſe of *Plays*, as *Plays* do their parts to offer it unto us, we ſhould not onely in them ſee our *faults*, but by them learn to amend our *faults*; and though we attribute not unto them a

power of working *ſpiritual Grace*, which is proper to the *Pulpit*; yet we may attribute to them a means of working *Moral Virtue*, which may be common to the *Stage*. Here he falls to exclaiming, (for he is excellent at loud exclamations) [*Fol.* 733.] *Oh, let it never be heard of in* Gath, *nor publiſhed in* Askelon; [*Fol.* 101.] *for who can be ſo groſsly ſtupid, to think to learn any Grace, or Virtue from a Play-houſe? Who ever ſought for Pearls in Dirt; or for a Cryſtal Spring in filthy Mire?* with many ſuch, no leſs *impertinent*, then *Pathetical* Interrogatories; which he would uſe, if he were but ſpeaking of a *Gooſe*'s going bare-foot. Indeed he bears himſelf very high; as if he were the onely *Atlas* to bear up the *Firmament* of *Virtue*; and that we are all children of the *Giants*, that fight againſt *God*, and all *goodneſs*: but we let him know, (if at leaſt he will learn) that we honour *Virtue* as much ſincerely, as he would ſeem to do, and we ſeek to advance *Virtue* by more ways, then he directs how to do. We acknowledge

Prayer

Prayer the moſt ſovereign means; then reading of *Scriptures*; then hearing of *Sermons*; then *conferring* with learned *Miniſters*; then *converſing* with Religious *Perſons*: but yet we exclude not inferiour helps; for ſeeing all the means we can uſe is little enough, why ſhould we neglect any *means*, though never ſo *mean*? And indeed, as *Seneca* ſaid of *Epicurus*, *Malè audit, infamis eſt, ſed immeritò: He hath an ill report, and is infamous, yet undeſervedly:* (for though he made *Pleaſure* the *Summum Bonum*, yet he meant a *Pleaſure* flowing out of *Virtue*) ſo we may ſay of *Plays*; *Malè audiunt, infames ſunt, ſed immeritò: They have an ill Name, and are infamous, but undeſervedly:* for though they be in ſhew but *Pleaſures*, yet they bring a *profit* with them, and conduce to *Virtue*. And ſeeing *Heathen* men might have, and oftentimes had in great eminency *Moral Virtues*, to what may we impute it more, then to their ſeeing of *Plays*? For, though *Philoſophy* gave them the *Rules*, and *Hiſtories* told them the *Tales*,

yet *Plays* onely ſhewed them the *Examples*, which gave the life to *both* the other. For *Rules* of *Philoſophy* are but dead Leſſons, and *Tales* of *Hiſtories* make but light impreſſion; the *Viva vox*, and *Action* of the *Player*, is as a Leſſon in *Muſick*, played unto us by the *Maſter*; and as a Seal upon both Senſe, and Underſtanding, the *Print* whereof is reciprocally carried from one to the other with infinite *repercuſſions*. *Rules* of *Philoſophy*, though they be good *Directions*, yet they want one to lead us by the hand; they bring us onely to *Video meliora, probóque*, and then leave us to *Deteriora ſequor*: where *Plays* do not onely ſhew us the *Right*, but lead us in it; not onely tell us the way, but tread it out before us. Reading of *Hiſtories*, though it be pleaſing to the Underſtanding, yet it is wearieſome to the Senſe; neither is the Underſtanding it ſelf ſo much wrought upon by that we read, as by what we hear, and ſee; and this makes *Plays* to be of far more uſe, and profit then *Hiſtories*; becauſe in them

we

we have *abſolu tely* the help of one Senſe more, and the help of the other Senſe with far more force, and greater contentment. And as for the Underſtanding, it is not onely ſooner, and better *Informed*, but is *Dilated* alſo, and made both more *capable*, and more *capacious*, by ſeeing of *Plays*, then by reading of Hiſtories: ſeeing in theſe the *Phantaſie*, receiving it onely from the dead Book, and doing it all, it ſelf alone, can be but faint in *delivering* it to the Underſtanding: where, in *Plays*, the *Seeing* prompts the *Hearing*, and the *Hearing* prompts the *Seeing*, and they both joyn together, to preſent it to the Fantaſie, which, receiving it with vigour, with vigour transmits it to the Underſtanding. I might quickly here grow tedious, if I ſhould follow the *Matter*, and not obſerve *Form*, but ſeeing too long *Walks*, though never ſo pleaſant, may be *wearieſome*, I will make a ſtand here; onely ſhewing, what an *Hill* is behinde to be aſcended, if, after private profits, I ſhould proceed to ſpeak of publick Benefits:

nefits: proving how neceſſary it is, that the multitude, who live by their labours ſhould have Recreations allowed them to ſweeten their pains: and that of all Recreations, hitherto invented, there is not any, for many Conſiderations, ſo worthy the embracing, as this of *Plays*: it is a *general* delight, general to *Sex*, to *Age*, to *Quality*; it is an *innocent* delight, innocent in *Deed*, and in *Occaſion*; it is a *cheap* delight, it ventures nothing, and ſpends but little; it is a *ſociable* delight, many do at once enjoy it, and all equally; it is a *ready* delight, without waſt of time, or trouble of waiting; it is a *refreſhing* delight, it becalms the Spirits, where moſt other delights make the Pulſes beat; it is a delight both to *Senſe*, and *Reaſon*: and, of the Senſes, more then one more then one way do at once partake it: and as for the *Reaſons*, we may truly ſay of *Plays*, that they *enlarge* it by *Diſcourſes*, *quicken* it by *Conceits*, and *direct* it by *Examples*. Theſe are ſome reaſons of many, to ſhew there is juſt cauſe, why *Plays* ſhould, and may delight us:

but

but to ſhew, that they do indeed delight us, what can be alledged better then that, which *Cicero* ſaith, *Quid ego dicam populum, ac vulgus imperitorum ludis magnopere delectari? quanquam id huic cauſæ ſatis eſt; ſunt enim populi, ac multitudinis Comitia: What ſhould I ſpeak of the delight, which common people take in Plays? of which we need ſeek no further reaſon then this, that they are the Marts of the people.* And leſt you ſhould think it a *baſe* delight, as delighting onely the *baſe* multitude: hear what he ſaith further, and ſaith it not onely as a *Witneſs*, but as a *Party*, making it a delight even of *States-men: Et nosmetipſi, qui ab delectatione omni negotiis impedimur; & in ipſa occupatione delectationes alias multas habere poſſumus, ludis tamen oblectamur, & ducimur: Even we our ſelves, who by reaſon of imployments are hindred from taking of any delight, and in the imployments themſelves may have many other delights; yet are we alſo affected, and taken with the delight of Plays.* And what will you ſay, if this man himſelf, who hath ſpoken ſo reproachfully

proachfully all this while of *Plays*, and would make us believe (*Fol.* 724.) that none but *lewd people* are delighted with them, even he alſo can be proved to delight in *Plays?* You would think it ſtrange: yet hear what *Cicero* ſaith to this point too, and that upon his credit: *Delectant homines, mihi crede, ludi, non eos ſolùm, qui fatentur, ſed illos etiam, qui diſſimulant: Plays, believe me, delight all; not them onely that confeſs it, but even them that would deny it, and do diſſemble it.* And who doubts, but that we ſhall finde this man amongſt the Oratour's *Diſſembiers?*

But to make an *End* with him, that never makes an end; ſeeing *Scriptures* in no kinde, *antient Fathers*, and *Councils*, not in our kinde, have ever condemned *Plays;* ſeeing no *Reaſons* of any force can be brought againſt them, and many may be alledged for them; ſeeing they rather deſerve *Commendation*, then need *Defence*, I hope to finde none either in *Judgment* ſo weak, or ſo ſtrong in *Paſſion*, as to ſet his hand

to

to this man's *pen*, or to lend his voyce to this man's throat, in making *Outcrys* againſt *Plays*; but that he will be content, as to ſee the wide world drawn in a *Map*, and a large *Hiſtory* in an *Abridgment*; ſo to ſee, and favour *Plays*, which are nothing, but *Epitomes* of the World's behaviour.

FINIS.